

THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

D SINCE 1877

MBER 1, 2007

VOL. 131

No. 43

NOV 07 2007



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Library leaders meet in Brookhaven

BROOKHAVEN (Special) -- The 36th Annual Mississippi Baptist Church Library Ministry Conference was held October 5-6, at First Church, Brookhaven. The purpose of this event was to inform, inspire and train library ministry workers to become more effective servants in their local church libraries.

"Our local church libraries offer vast resources that benefit all of the ministries of the church," said Ian Richardson, director of communication services of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson, and coordinator for the conference. "Often the church library is underutilized, so church members are encouraged to visit their libraries to experience first-hand the information that is provided for all age groups."

Training courses that were provided during the conference included tracts for the new and experienced library worker. Among the courses offered were:

- Sharing Jesus Through the Library.
- Basic Administration.
- Researching and Writing Your Church History.
- Keeping the "Stuff."



LIBRARY MINISTRY LEADERS -- Officers for 2007-08 for the Mississippi Baptist Church Library Ministry organization include (from left) Cathy Moss, First Church, Natchez, president; Cheryl Swain, First Church, Madison, associational coordinator; Mary Jo Harrison, First Church, Madison, program chairman; Mary Jayne McReynolds, Star Church, Star, secretary-treasurer; Brynda Pendergrast, First Church, Natchez, historian; and Gene Fitts, First Church, Corinth, publicity chairman. (Special photo courtesy of Gene Fitts)

- Collection Development.
- Introduction to the Dewey Decimal System and the Sears subject heading system.
- Developing Your Church Library Ministry Team.
- Prevention, Not Repair.

"Church Library Ministry teams are serious about touching lives through library ministry. Their presence at this conference shows their commitment and faithfulness to this task," said Cathy Moss, president of the Mississippi Church Library Ministry organization and member of First Church, Natchez.

The keynote speaker for the conference was author Lori Copeland, who began her career in 1985 writing for the secular market. However, in 1995 Copeland sensed that God was calling her to use her gift of writing to honor Him. To date, she has had more than sixty Christian novels published.

Church Library Ministry officers elected for 2007-08 were Cathy Moss, president; Sarah Rutledge, Calvary Church, Bogie Chitto, vice-president; Mary Jayne McReynolds, Star Church, Star, secretary-treasurer; Mary Jo Harrison, First Church, Madison, program chairman; Brynda Pendergrast, First Church, Natchez, historian; Gene Fitts, First Church, Corinth, publicity chairman; and Cheryl Swain, First Church, Madison, associational coordinator.

Program leaders for the conference included:

- Donna Ainsworth of Magee, retired school librarian and trainer for Book Systems, Inc.
- Kary Barth of McKinney, Texas, regional manager for Kapco Book Protection.
- Mary Broussard, library ministry team leader at Hebron Church, Denham Springs, La.
- Hope Ferguson, library ministry team leader at First Church, Natchitoches, La.
- Sandra Fitts, library ministry team leader at First Church, Corinth.
- Cheryl Swain, library assistant at First Church, Madison.
- Peggy Tacon, library ministry team leader at Dauphin Way Church, Mobile, Al.
- Marty Woodall, library ministry team leader at Shoal Creek Church, Deatsville, Al.

Future Church Library Ministry training events include the Ministry From the Heart retreat on March 27-29, at Camp Garaywa in Clinton, and the Annual State Conference on October 3-4, at First Church, Madison.

Additional information about this ministry may be obtained by contacting the Communication Services Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3378 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 378. E-mail: jchen@mbcb.org. Web site: www.mbc.org.

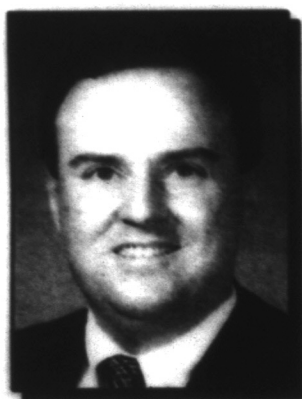
Patterson portrait posted



Members of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, whose Sunday School class is known as "Marjean's Girls," gathered recently at Camp Garaywa in Clinton to dedicate the portrait of the late Marjean Patterson, their longtime Sunday School teacher and for many years the executive director of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union. The Sunday School class members raised the funds for the portrait, which hangs in the lobby of Patterson Place at Camp Garaywa. Patterson Place is the adult lodge that was built at the Mississippi Baptist Girls in Action campground in the late 1990 and named in honor of Patterson. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



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Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Send news, communication, and
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VOLUME 131 • NUMBER 43
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$9.35 per
year payable in advance. Economy plans
available for cooperating Mississippi churches.
Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS.
Member, Association of State Baptist Papers.
Deadlines: News items — one calendar
week prior to requested publication date.
Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to
requested publication date. All submissions
are subject to editing.

Running for cover

We all knew this was coming — except the 89 Mississippi legislators who voted after Hurricane Katrina to allow casinos to move onshore.

Remember what we were promised? House Bill 45 would allow casinos to move on to land, but only 800 strictly-controlled feet from the waters of the Gulf on which they were situated before Katrina.

Then we found out House Bill 45 contained a real sweetheart deal, an exemption from the 800-foot rule for all public easements and rights-of-way, such as the four lanes of Highway 90 that hug the beach between the water and dry land.

That exemption of course means the gambling halls can move inland considerably farther than 800 literal feet. However, even that outrage pales beside the audacious campaign by casino developers now underway to circumvent state law.

Throughout this past summer, Biloxi Capital LLC has pressured the Biloxi City Council and mayor to approve

a rezoning of the old Tivoli hotel property to make way for another billion-dollar gambling development.

It has become complicated and quite contentious, but the important summary point to remember is that the Tivoli developers are attempting to force the city to become involved in redefining the language of House Bill 45 regarding the water line from which the 800-foot rule (joke that it is) begins. It all has to do with rezoning the Tivoli site.

The Tivoli site is currently not zoned for gambling and is not even eligible under the provisions of House Bill 45, but the developers are pushing anyway.

The result would be to give the Tivoli developers an unfair advantage over casinos already in operation along the Coast and open up even more Gulf Coast land to gambling that was not previously zoned for that activity.

State Representative Bobby Moak of Bogie Chitto, chairman of the House Gaming Committee and recipient of at least \$27,500 from gambling interests in this election cycle alone, apparently attempted to intervene on behalf of the Tivoli project at the request of the developers — even though he stated otherwise.

Moak even threatened to show up at a Biloxi City Council meeting scheduled to consider the Tivoli rezoning issue. That brought a strong rebuke from the man who appointed him chairman of the House Gaming Committee, Speaker Billy McCoy. "He is in charge of legislation, not administration," McCoy said in a September 4 article in the Sun Herald newspaper.

McCoy's criticism of Moak "would seem to eliminate any legitimate legislative reason for Moak to be poking around Biloxi inquiring about the Tivoli project," the Sun Herald opined.

On September 19, the Biloxi City Council caved to the gambling special interests and voted 4-3 to approve the Tivoli rezoning. Biloxi Mayor A.J. Holloway, himself an avid casino supporter, was so troubled by the political power play that he vetoed the Council's action. The Council has not been able to override Holloway's veto.

In light of this latest power play by the Mississippi gambling/political complex, some of the strongest legislative supporters of the original House Bill 45 are now expressing surprise — yes, surprise! — and running for cover.

"They're trying to cheat and come up with what they want," said state Representative Roger Ishee of Gulfport in a September 22 article in the Sun Herald. Ishee was instrumental in drafting and pushing House Bill 45 through the special legislative session in 2005.

"They're trying to stretch what we passed," Ishee said. He also accused the developers of trying "to change the rules while the game's going on," and promised to surprise developers in an upcoming session of the Legislature the same way developers had surprised legislators with the Tivoli rezoning.

It should come as no surprise that the gambling/political complex will not rest until there are slot machines as far north as the Tennessee state line. Their secret ambition all along has been to turn the entire state of Mississippi into a gambling haven that will match their complete control of the state of Nevada.

As an example, consider that Governor Haley Barbour and a majority of the Mississippi Legislature gave them everything they demanded in House Bill 45, and it still wasn't enough. Two years later, they want more. Much more.

Look for power plays like the Tivoli project from the gamblers in the future, and look for pro-gambling politicians to again express surprise that the gamblers are trying to get around the law.

Problem is, they're always the only ones who are surprised.

How legislators voted on land-based gambling (HB 45)

* denotes member of a Mississippi Baptist church

House of Representatives YEA-89 (for land-based gambling)

Name	City	District
Akins, Noel*	Oxford	12
Bailey, Willie	Greenville	49
Baker, Mark	Brandon	74
Banks, Earle	Jackson	67
Bentz, Leonard	Biloxi	116
Blackmon Jr., Edward	Canton	57
Broomfield, Billy	Moss Point	110
Brown, Cecil	Jackson	66
Burnett, Clara	Tunica	9
Calhoun, Credell	Jackson	68
Carlton, Virginia*	Columbia	100
Clark, Bryant	Pickens	47
Clarke, Alyce	Jackson	69
Coleman, Linda	Mound Bayou	29
Coleman, Mary	Jackson	65
Comprella, J.P.	Bay St. Louis	122
Davis, Lee Jarrell	Hattiesburg	102
Dedeaux, Dirk*	Gulfport	95
Derry, Bill	Jackson	64
Espy III, Henry	Clarksdale	26
Evans, James	Jackson	70
Flaggs Jr., George	Vicksburg	55
Fredericks, Frances	Gulfport	110
Guice Jr., Daniel	Ocean Springs	114
Hamilton, Frank	Hurley	109
Harrison, Esther	Columbia	41
Hinds Sr., John	Greenville	50
Holland, Steve	Plantersville	16
Holloway Sr., Gregory	Hazlehurst	76
Ishee, Roger	Gulfport	118
Janus, Michael	Biloxi	117
Johnson III, Robert	Natchez	94
Malone, Bennett	Carthage	48
Martinson, Rita	Madison	55
Mayhall Jr., W.T.	Southaven	40
Mayo, John	Clarksdale	25
Moak, Bobby*	Bogus Chitto	53
Moore, John*	Brandon	60
Morris, Leonard	Batesville	11
Myers, David	McComb	98
Norquist, David	Cleveland	28
Patterson, Randall	Biloxi	115
Peranich, Diane	Pass Christian	121
Reed, John*	Gautier	112
Reeves, John*	Jackson	71
Robinson Jr., Walter	Bolton	63

Simpson Jr., James*

Name	City	District
Smith, Clayton*	Brandon	59
Smith, Fern	Carthage	27
Snowden, Greg*	Meridian	83
Staples, Gary	Laurel	88
Straughter, Rufus	Belzoni	51
Thomas, Sara	Indianola	31
Upshaw, Jessica	Diamondhead	95
Watson, Percy	Hattiesburg	103
Whittington, May	Schlater	34
Woods, Tommy	Byhalia	52
Young Sr., Charles	Meridian	82
Zuber III, Hank	Ocean Springs	113

NAY-53 (against land-based gambling)

Name	City	District
Aldridge, Brian*	Tupelo	17
Arinder, Tracy	Morton	75
Baker, Larry*	Senatobia	8
Barnett, Jim	Brookhaven	92
Beckett, Jim*	Bruce	23
Bondurant, Sidney	Grenada	24
Bounds, Scott*	Philadelphia	44
Buck, Kelvin	Holly Springs	5
Chism, Gary*	Columbia	37
Cummings, Ricky	Iuka	1
Dickson, Reese	Macon	42
Eaton, Bo*	Taylorville	79
Ellington, Jim*	Raymond	73
Fillingame, Joey*	Sumrall	101
Fleming, Erik	Jackson	72
Formby, Mark*	Picayune	109
Franks Jr., Jamie	Mooreville	18
Frierson, Herb*	Poplarville	106
Gadd, Jack	Hickory Flat	13
Gibbs, David	West Point	38
Gregory, James*	Louisville	43
Gunn, Philip*	Clinton	56
Harrison, Eugene	Olive Branch	6
Horne, Steve*	Meridian	81
Howell, Bobby*	Kilmichael	46
Hudson, Joey*	Monticello	91
Jennings, Wanda	DeSoto	7
Lott, Mike*	Petal	104
Markham Jr., J.B.	G'wood Springs	20
McBride, Werner*	Courtland	10
McCoy, Billy*	Rienzi	3
Miles, Bill	Fulton	21
Mims V, Sam	McComb	97

Pass Christian

Name	City	District
Brandon	Carthage	27
Meridian	Laurel	88
Belzoni	Indianola	31
Diamondhead	Hattiesburg	103
Schlater	Byhalia	52
Meridian	Ocean Springs	113

Montgomery, Pat

Name	City	District
Moss, Harvey*	Corinth	15
Nicholson, Billy*	Little Rock	78
Parker, Deryk*	Lucedale	107
Reed, Dannie*	Ackerman	35
Reynolds, Tommy*	Water Valley	33
Robinson, Eric*	Quitman	84
Rogers, Margaret	New Albany	14
Rogers, Ray	Pearl	61
Rosenberry, Clinton*	Mendenhall	22
Smith, Jeff*	Columbus	39
Stringer, Johnny	Montrose	67
Sullivan, Preston*	Oktola	22
Turner, Jerry	Baldwyn	18
Vince, Robert	Sandy Hook	99
Walley, Shaun*	Leakesville	105
Ward, Greg	Ripley	4
Warren, Joe	Mt. Olive	90
Weathersby, Tom*	Florence	62
Wells-Smith, Carmel*	Pascagoula	111

PRESENT

Name	City	District
Ellis, Tyrone	Starkville	38
Perkins Sr., William	Greenwood	32

NOT VOTING

Name	City	District
Huddleston, Robert	Sumner	30
Middleton, Chuck	Port Gibson	85
Scott, Omeria	Laurel	80
Shows, Bobby*	Ellenville	89

ABSENT

Name	City	District
Masterson, Chester	Vicksburg	54

Mississippi Senate

YEA-89 (for land-based gambling)

Name	City	District
Albritton, Sid*	Picayune	40
Brown, Terry*	Columbia	17
Burton, Terry	Newton	31
Chaney, Mike	Vicksburg	23
Clarke, Buck	Hollandale	22
Cuevas, Scotty	Pass Christian	46
Davis, Doug*	Hernando	1
Dawkins, Debbie	Pass Christian	48
Dearing, Bob	Natchez	37
Doney, Ralph	Holly Springs	2

Harden, Alice

Name	City	District
Hewes III, William	Gulfport	49
Hohn, John	Jackson	26
Huggins, Bunky	Greenwood	14
Jackson, Robert	Markis	11
Water Valley	DeKalb	32
Jordan, David	Greenwood	24
Kirby, Dean*	Pearl	30
Lee, Ezell*	Picayune	47
Michel, Walter	Jackson	25
Moffat, Tommy	Gautier	52
Morgan, Ed*	Hattiesburg	45
Possey, Lynn*	Union Church	36
Ross, Charlie	Moss Point	51
Simmons, William	Cleveland	13
Thames, Billy*	Mize	34
Walls Jr., Johnnie	Greenville	12
Williamson, Gloria	Philadelphia	18

NAY-21 (against land-based gambling)

Name	City	District
Browning, Nickay	Portotoc	3
Bryan, Hob*	Amory	7
Butler, Kelvin	Magnolia	38
Carmichael, Videt*	Meridian	33
Flowers, Merle	Southaven	19
Frazier, Hillman	Jackson	27
Gordon, Jack*	Oktola	8
Hyde-Smith, Cindy*	Brookhaven	39
Jackson, Gary*	French Camp	15
King Jr., Tom*	Petal	44
Lee, Perry*	Mendenhall	35
Little, Travis*	Corinth	4
Mettetal, Nolan	Sardis	10
Nunnelee, Alan*	Tupelo	6
Pickering, Stacey*	Osco	42
Thomas, Joseph	Yazoo City	21
Tollison, Gray	Oxford	9
Turner, Bennie	West Point	16
Walley, Shannon*	Leakesville	43
White, Richard*	Terry	29
Williamson Jr., J.P.	Belmont	5

PRESENT

Name	City	District
Goffitt, Tommy	Biloxi	50

ABSENT

Name	City	District
Harvey, Billy*	Prentiss	41

Breast cancer / abortion link debate heats up

WASHINGTON (BP) — Ireland has the lowest rate of breast cancer out of nine selected European countries, and it also has the lowest rate of abortion.

These findings are part of a study that may provide new evidence for a connection between abortion and breast cancer. It is one of two such reports released in separate medical journals in October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

"The South East of England has more breast cancer than other parts of the British Isles. It also has the highest abortion rate," Patrick Carroll wrote in the *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons*.

Carroll, a scientist who researches epidemics, mapped the trends of high rates of breast cancer with rates of abortion in nine different European countries, including Scotland, Finland, Denmark, Ireland, and England, and found the two to be correlative. His report was published just two days after the journal *Cancer Research* published its findings on the connection between the existence of fetal cells in a mother's blood stream and the occurrence of breast cancer.

The fetal cell study, conducted at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, was an attempt to explain the known effect of child

bearing in reducing a woman's chances of breast cancer.

Although many are unaware of the link between a woman's reproductive history — especially a previous abortion — and breast cancer, it is an important risk factor, says Karen Malec of the Coalition on Abortion/Breast Cancer.

There is resistance among some organizations that educate women about breast cancer to making the connection between abortion and the disease. These include the American Cancer Society and Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

Baptist Press contacted the Internet site breastcancer.org but was not granted an interview with its president, Marisa Weiss. The website describes itself as the "world's most trafficked online resource for medically reviewed breast health and breast cancer information" but makes no mention of reproductive history as a risk factor.

Most of these organizations cite a study conducted by the National Cancer Institute. "In March 2003, the National Cancer Institute's Board of Scientific Advisors and Board of Scientific Counselors unanimously agreed that epidemiological evidence does not support any association between abortion and breast cancer," according to information on the Komen website.

While most agree there is a link between the first pregnancy and reducing the risk of cancer, the independent link between abortion and the risk is disputed. Researchers like Carroll and activists like Malec insist there is a link.

"This is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and there is no mention of this issue on [my opposition's] websites," Malec said. "I think it's egregious."

The correlation that is often cited between abortion and breast cancer exists in the development of breast tissue during pregnancy. At the beginning stages of pregnancy, hormones start the maturation process of breast lobules to prepare the body for breast feeding, Malec told Baptist Press.

"These lobules progress from type one ... [to] type four. Once they become type four, they are permanently cancer resistant," Malec said.

A report produced by the Breast Cancer Prevention Institute also shows this link. "Induced abortion leaves a woman with more places for breast cancer to start," according to the BCPI report. "A woman who has a full-term pregnancy decreases her breast cancer risk."

A woman who has an abortion often has more vulnerable, type one breast tissue than she did before she got pregnant. A higher risk of malignant growths results, with "95% of all breast cancers known to arise in type one lobules. A little bit of pregnancy doesn't protect women from cancer," Malec said.

Induced abortion has a higher risk than spontaneous abortion (miscarriage), according to BCPI, because of the exposure to pregnancy hormones. When a woman miscarries because of an abnormality, the hormones estrogen and progesterone do not reach the same levels as a normal pregnancy, and the maturation of breast tissue does not progress, the report said.

The Cancer Research study on fetal cells was looking for another reason other than

breast tissue maturation to explain why child bearing might be more protective. During normal pregnancy, fetal cells enter the mother's bloodstream. These cells, called fetal microchimerism (FMc), stay in the mother's peripheral blood stream and possibly could act as watchdogs against malignant cells in the mother's body, according to Vijayakrishna Gadi and J. Lee Nelson, the researchers who conducted the study.

In-depth looks into the societal trends of women's reproductive habits and high breast cancer rates can be used as a predictor across entire countries, Carroll said. He chose the nine European countries as case studies because of the comprehensive data available on abortion incidence. He looked at seven different risk factors, including hormonal contraceptives and a low age at first birth, that might be used to determine breast cancer rates.

Carroll concluded the best predictor for breast cancer is induced abortion. He also observed certain trends among social classes and found breast cancer to be more common in upper-class women who may be busy pursuing their careers and college degrees, and choose abortion.

"Higher-class women have a later age at first birth and consequently higher-class women have nulliparous [never giving birth] abortions, which are more carcinogenic," the study said.

Reducing the risk of breast cancer is possible even if a woman has had an induced abortion, according to BCPI. "There is some data to suggest that the sooner a woman delivers and nurses a child after having had a prior induced abortion, the smaller the risk increase from the abortion," the BCPI report said. Having babies earlier in life, breast feeding those babies, maintaining a healthy weight and not smoking are ways to reduce risk for breast cancer, according to BCPI.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND
FRONT PAGE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

NOVEMBER 1, 2007

VOL. 131

NO. 43

Church burned, again

JERUSALEM (BP) — Baptist House, home of the Narkis Street Baptist Church in Jerusalem, was attacked by arsonists in the pre-dawn hours of Oct. 24, but quick action from neighbors limited the damage to furnishings and windows. The arsonists broke into the building and set fires in three places, Joe Broom, business services manager of the Baptist Convention in Israel, told the Israel Broadcast Authority. The stone floor was charred but not damaged. Chairs were burned and the building suffered smoke and water damage. To fight the fire, firefighters had to break various windows at the building. The church was burned to the ground in 1982 by anti-missionary Orthodox Jewish militants and more recently a bookstore in the building was firebombed. No recent threats had been received, church leaders said. Police have no suspects and the arson may have simply been the work of vandals, investigators said. It appeared trash had been brought in off the street, placed under chairs and set ablaze with an accelerant. Extremists bent on destroying the building likely would have caused more damage. The Israeli office of the Anti-Defamation League, however, condemned the attack as an "apparent hate crime," the Jerusalem Post reported. "We urged authorities to do everything in their power to protect all religious sites and see that the perpetrators of the crime are brought to justice," the ADL said. The attack certainly should not be an occasion for anti-Semitism, a former Southern Baptist representative to Israel said. "This was not an act for which either the state of Israel or the Jewish people are to be judged," said Jim Sibley, now director of the Pasche Institute of Jewish Studies at Criswell College in Dallas. "This underscores the need for greater prayer for Christians who face opposition in the Middle East. Just last week, a Baptist brother who managed the Bible shop in Gaza was murdered by a Muslim extremist. There is real spiritual warfare going on in the Middle East. It's not just military and political." While media reports often focus on problems of violence in the Middle East, there is good news to be found — and genuine religious freedom would open the door for more good news, Sibley said. "The good news is that peace is breaking out," he said.

Looking back

10 years ago

A group of five deaf Mississippi Baptists from Woodland Hills Church, Jackson, travel to Venezuela to help strengthen deaf missions in that South American country.

20 years ago

Trustees of Mercer University in Atlanta take a solid stand in support of President R. Kirby Godsey in response to a Marietta layman who accused Godsey of "immoral" acts on campus and alleged that Godsey was a "universalist."

50 years ago

First Church, West Point, adopts a comprehensive budget of \$88,000 for the 1957-58 church year, with 46% of the budget allocated to the Cooperative Program.



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

PRAY ABOUT IT

Prayer is a powerful spiritual force in the life of a believer. It makes a difference in the individual. It reshapes not only the circumstances around us but also our attitude toward the circumstances. It is an open gate to the heart of God, and it is an invitation for God to enter and bless. Jesus believed in prayer. He understood prayer. He taught prayer and above all, He prayed.

Our youngest grandchild is only three but he is learning about prayer. Coleman was in the first months of his educational development process and attending kindergarten three mornings a week. He was learning things about finger painting, shapes, and socializing with his three-year old peer group. When his mama picked him up from school, the teacher informed her that there had been some disturbance in class that day and some of the students had not been particularly nice to each other. As a result, Coleman and some of his friends got to experience timeout at school.

When they got in the car to go home, Coleman's mama began to talk with him about what had happened at school. He readily admitted that he had gotten in trouble and had not been as nice as he should have been. She expressed her disappointment to him and told him that it made mama and daddy so sad when he acted that way. She also



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

explained to him that God did not want him to be ugly to his friends. Coleman was sitting in the backseat strapped in his car seat and he said, "Mama, do you think we need to pray about this?" Immediately his mama recognized that he might be a little bit manipulative and has already learned that prayer may get him out of his difficult situation. At the same time, she understood the importance of helping him understand that prayer is important. It does help and it does make a difference in our lives. So there in the car, they paused for a moment, prayed, and asked God to help him to be nice to his friends and treat them as God would want him to treat them.

It was noontime and they had planned to meet another mother who had a child about Coleman's age for lunch. They went on to the engagement. They met, ate, played, and then got in the car to go home. Buckled in and back on the road, Coleman piped up and made the observation, "Mama, I think it worked!" He was talking about the time of prayer, and he pointed out

that he had been nice to his little friend. It was just a small instance in the life of a little child, but I wonder how many times God looks at His older children that are grown up and maybe have forgotten life's early and wonderful lessons that prayer does make a difference. It works.

When Jesus' disciples came to Him and requested that He teach them about prayer, He handed to them and to us a wonderful model for prayer. Far more than just words to be repeated, He gave to us nugget after nugget helping us to understand and embrace the wonder of prayer. He wanted them to understand that God presides over us. You remember what He said, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt.6:9-10). The more we know about prayer and the more we spend time in prayer the more we understand that God is God. He is holy, He is above, He is different, and He is God Almighty. He presides over the affairs of people. Regardless of how monumental and significant a thing may seem or how small and inciden-

tal it may seem, He is still God and He does care about the way we treat our friends.

Jesus also taught us in prayer that God provides. "Give us this day our daily bread." Do you get hungry every day? Most of us do. In fact, we get hungry several times a day. Over and over, God so graciously provides for us. While there are people around the world and even folks not far removed from us who wonder where their next meal will come from, most of us struggle with the fact that we have too much to eat and often over-indulge. The food is good and God has blessed us abundantly.

One other thought that comes from the instructions of Jesus about praying is that God guides. Remember in the prayer that He says, "Lead us." Stop and meditate on what Jesus asks us to ask God. We are to ask God to lead us. There probably is not a day that passes that you do not come to some crossroads moment of decision that this request is not needed. Lead us in what we are about to do. Lead us in the relationships that we have. Lead us in our work. Lead us in our families. Lead us to honor your name.

Take time today to pray. Take time at the close of the day to reflect on the wonderful truth that Coleman discovered, "Mama, I think it worked!" Prayer will make a difference in your life.

The author may be contacted at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. E-mail: jfutral@mbcb.org.

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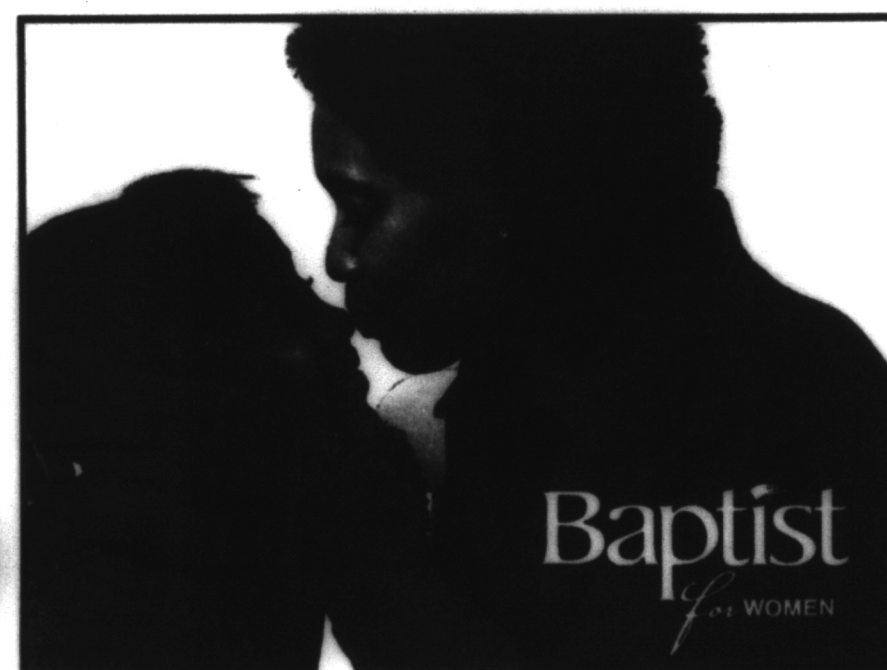
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House bill offers problems for religious institutions

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. House of Representatives is expected to vote in the coming days on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), a bill opponents say could have a dramatic impact on religious freedoms by forcing Christian businesses and organizations to hire homosexuals.

Known as H.R. 3685, the bill will be debated one month after another piece of legislation related to homosexuality, the hate crimes bill, passed the Senate as part of the defense authorization bill. That latter bill currently is being reviewed by a joint conference between the Senate and House, which had passed a hate crimes bill as a stand-alone bill.

Baptist Press (BP) spoke on Oct. 23 with Mike Johnson, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF), about both bills and why his organization is opposing them. ADF is a Christian legal organization that defends religious liberties. Following is the transcript:

BP: Why should Christians oppose ENDA? After all, supporters say it's simply about protecting individual rights.

JOHNSON: It's a dangerous and blatantly unconstitutional bill. As [ADF President] Alan Sears said, it pits the government directly against the free exercise of religion. That's a problem, because you're placing sexual behaviors and preferences above the constitutional rights of employers.

BP: Supporters say the legislation has an exemption for religious organizations. Is it as broad as they say it is?

JOHNSON: It's our contention that it's not a true exemption because it's so very limited. If you look at it closely, only churches — essentially pastors — would be exempt under the current provisions. And every other faith-based organization will thereby will be discriminated against under the bill. So, you're looking at Christian schools, Christian

camps, pro-family advocacy groups, faith-based soup kitchens and Bible bookstores — the exemption is not going to cover them.

BP: Even if the bill did have enough exemptions for religious organizations, conservatives would still have concerns, wouldn't they?

JOHNSON: Of course. All of this legislation flies right in the face of free speech and the free exercise of religion. This is one more effort to silence people of faith. So, you have the rights of free association and religious liberty and the freedom of conscience — guaranteed to us by the Constitution -- being undermined by these laws.

BP: How does the hate crimes bill impact religious freedom, when supporters of the bill say it's simply about protecting people from violent crime?

JOHNSON: First of all, there are no 'love' crimes when it comes to violent crime. All of those are hate crimes. The problem is that, if the bill becomes law, citizens are going to be subject to criminal prosecution — not just for what they do but for what they think and feel and believe.

The bill is unnecessary, because you've got federal and state laws already in place to punish people who commit violent crimes, and they've served us well. If the legislation becomes law, then you've got this two-tiered discriminatory criminal justice system. All violent crimes deserve equal justice under the law.

The ultimate problem is that it opens the door for censorship and the prosecution of religious beliefs. That's the primary concern. That's how those laws have been used in other countries. These are not even hypotheticals any longer. We can look to the experiences of other nations to see that it's certain to follow. Hate crimes laws are just an effort to enforce the orthodoxy of political correctness, and it curtails the freedom of speech, and usually that's religious speech.

BP: Give an example of how this could impact the preaching about orthodox beliefs of homosexuality.

JOHNSON: ADF was involved in the now-famous case of [pastor] Ake Green in Sweden. He was criminally tried and convicted for preaching what the Bible said about homosexuality from his own pulpit, within the safe walls of his own church — or so he thought. And he was convicted, and we had to take it all the way to the Swedish Supreme Court.

Ultimately he was acquitted, but that's the kind of thing that it leads to. It opens the door for the restriction of thought and for the prosecution of those who adhere to traditional values and biblical beliefs.

BP: Would you say there are some good-intentioned people in Congress who are supporting these bills who don't realize the negative impact it could have on religious freedom?

JOHNSON: I'm sure that's true. On its surface, it sounds like a good idea to many people. Who would be for hate crimes? But you have to look beneath the surface at what the effect of it will certainly be. In Canada and France, people have been fined for publicly criticizing homosexuality.

BP: Are we dealing here with a slippery slope, where these bills could lead to various court interpretations and perhaps even to worse bills down the road?

JOHNSON: Absolutely. If you open this Pandora's Box, then it's going to be very difficult to stop it, and that's what we've seen in these other countries — it's always something small that leads to something more, and it desensitizes the public and is a direct threat to religious liberty.

Editor's note: The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention has announced opposition to this bill and requested Southern Baptists contact Congressmen and Senators.



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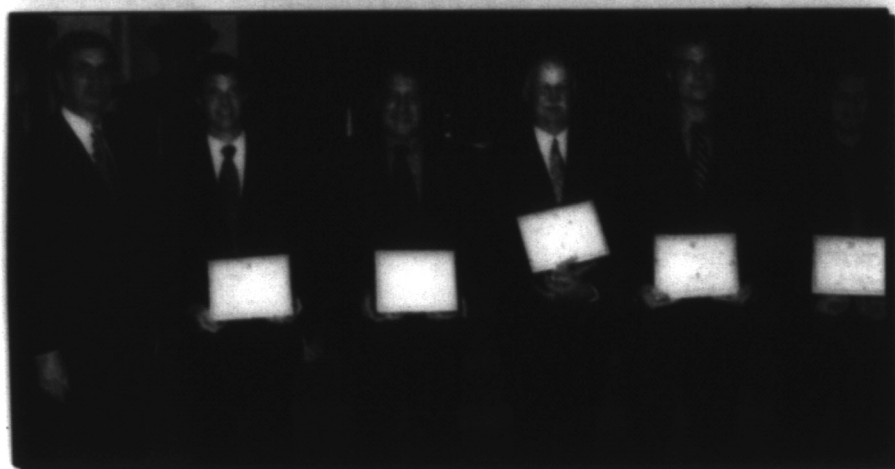
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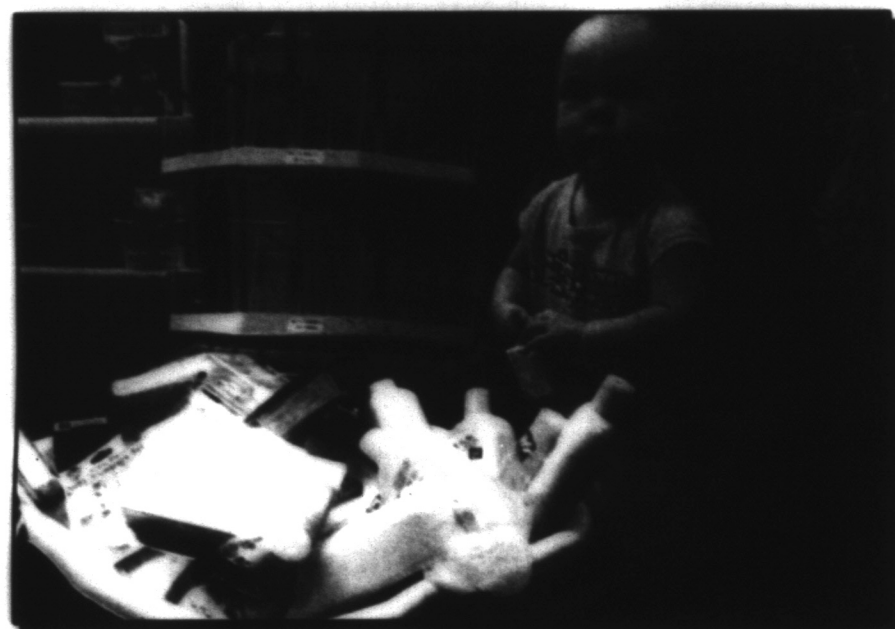
JUST FOR THE RECORD



MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS



1. Deacon Ordination, First Church, Kosciusko



2. Items for Crisis Pregnancy, Indian Springs Church, Jones Assoc.



3. Perfect Attendance, Park Haven Church, Laurel



4. Schilling recognized, First Church, Magnolia

1. First Church, Kosciusko, ordained five deacons Sept. 30. Shown are pastor Barry C. Corbett, Mark Hartnett, Luther Burrell, Bobby Crowe, Greg Quillin, and Steven Rutledge.

2. The Mission Friends of Indian Springs Church, Jones Association, recently donated baby care items to the Crisis Pregnancy Center, Laurel. Shown is Kate Smith helping deliver the items.

3. Park Haven Church, Laurel, recently presented a certificate for two years perfect Sunday School attendance to Jim Leggett. Shown are Betty Reynolds, Leggett, Billie Ishee, and pastor Steven Holifield.

4. First Church, Magnolia, honored Elizabeth Schilling with a reception recognizing her 60 years as church organist Sept. 23. Shown are Schilling, left, with her daughters Kim and Wanda. Barry Ward, pastor.

5. Calvary Church, Greenwood, ordained Billy Stubbs and Roy Smith as deacons Sept. 23. Shown are Cheryl Stubbs, Stubbs, pastor Wayne Kimbrough, Smith, and Susan Smith.

6. Williamsville Church, Williamsville, recognized deacons Emmit Skeen and Bob Arnett for their service. Shown are Sue Skeen, Skeen, Mavis Arnett, Arnett, and pastor Junior Davis.

7. Mt. Gilead Church, Meridian, ordained Grady Yeager as deacon Sept. 23. Shown are Jennifer Yeager, Yeager, and pastor Gilbert Eaves.

8. The BALL (Be Active and Live Longer) senior adult group of Friendship Church, McComb, visited the Old Country Store, Lorman, Oct. 9. Shown are the participants.

9. Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, is hosting a community singing with the Danny Smith Singers Nov. 20, 6 p.m.

10. Highland Church, Meridian, will host author Lisa Harper and singer-songwriter Kim Hill at A Night of Real Christmas Nov. 11, 5 p.m. Free admission.



5. Deacon Ordinations, Calvary Church, Greenwood



6. Deacons recognized, Williamsville Church, Williamsville



7. Yeager ordained as deacon, Mt. Gilead Church, Meridian



8. BALL senior adult group, Friendship Church, McComb

JUST FOR THE RECORD



11. Deacon Ordinations, Antioch Church, Brandon



12. Deacon Ordinations, Macedonia Church, Petal



13. Deacon Ordinations, Tangipahoa Church, Summit



14. Deacon Ordination, Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale

11. Antioch Church, Brandon, recently ordained Greg Thornton and Mark Russell as deacons. Shown are Donnie Stuart, Thornton, Russell, and Gayden Harrell.

12. Macedonia Church, Petal, ordained Forrest Shows and Harry Harrington as deacons Oct. 7. Shown are pastor Jerry Doggett, Harrington, Shows, and Jimmie Garrard.

13. Tangipahoa Church, Summit, held a deacon ordination Aug. 12. Shown, from left, are Glenn Matthews, Robert Cockerham, pastor Mike Morris, Tommy Carruth, and Richard Woods.

14. Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale, ordained Jeff Williams as deacon Sept. 23. Shown are Susan Williams, Williams, and pastor Jim Collier.

15. The Sallis Church, Sallis, drama team recently presented a program at their home church Sept. 30. The group uses puppets, dowel rods, sign language, pantomime, songs and skits for their presentations. Shown is the team.

16. The wMu of Diamondhead Church, Diamondhead, celebrated the beginning of a new year with a tea honoring Gwen Williams Sept. 15. Shown are Williams and the participants.

17. Chris Holzinger, a member of Baxterville Church, Lumberton, recently returned from a mission trip to Peru. Shown is Holzinger leading worship.

18. Bradford Chapel Church, Calhoun Association, recently doubled their Margaret Lackey State Missions goal of \$1200. Shown are Natalie James, Darlene Denton, and Julia Bingham.

19. First Church, Charleston, ordained Ron Hames and Roy Shook as deacons Oct. 14. Shown, front are Hames, Jennifer Hames, Shook, and Carolyn Shook. John Price, (rear, center), pastor.



19. Deacon Ordination, First Church, Charleston



15. Drama Team, Sallis Church, Sallis



16. Gwen Williams honored, Diamondhead Church, Diamondhead



17. Peru Mission Trip, Baxterville Church, Lumberton



18. Missions goal doubled, Bradford Chapel Church, Calhoun Assoc.

Bibliocipher

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BQ DBMD EQVQGDQDB
KQ, MZL FQGQPNQDB
ZAD KO EAFLJ, BMDDB
AZQ DBMD VRLWQDB
BPK; DBQ EAFL DBMD P
BMNQ JUAXQZ, DBQ
JMKQ JBMII VRLWQ BPK
PZ DBQ IMJD LMO.

VABZ DEQINQ: YAFDO-
QPWBD

Clue: V = I

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Proverbs One: Seven.



22. RAs and GAs walk-a-thon, Mt. Horeb Church, Collins

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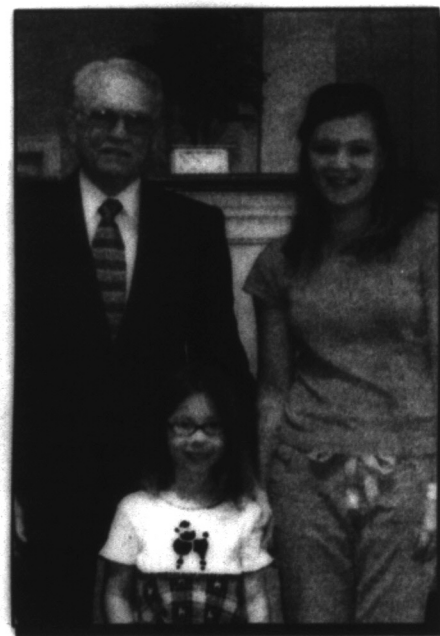


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JUST FOR THE RECORD



20. Baptist College Day, New Home Church, Fulton



21. Perfect Attendance, First Church, Cleveland



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

20. New Home Church, Fulton, held a Baptist College Day recently. Shown are pastor Michael Warren, and students Jay Nanney and Maurice Sing.

21. First Church, Cleveland, honored Charles Boyles, Erin White, and Gina Gillespie for one year of perfect Sunday School attendance Oct. 14.

22. The GAs and RAs of Mt. Horeb Church, Collins, raised \$1200 in a walk-a-thon Oct. 14 for World Hunger Relief. Twenty-five participants walked five miles to complete the project.

23. Dumas Church, Dumas, ordained Richie Hatcher to the ministry Sept. 30. He is currently serving as pastor of Old Oak Grove Church, Myrtle. Shown are pastor Scott Hudson, Roy Bostick, Hatcher, and Jerry Lowery.

24. Williamsville Church, Williamsville, ordained Mickey Russell, Jr., and Kenneth Quick as deacons Sept. 9. They are shown here with their wives Lynn Russell and Diane Quick.

25. Twenty-three youth and three adults from Neshoba Church, Neshoba Association, attended Centrifuge at Union University, Jackson, Tenn., this summer. Eight accepted Christ as savior, and one surrendered to missions. Shown are the participants.

26. The Jones County Mission Friends held their annual Mission Friends Day at Indian Springs Church, Laurel. Shown are some of the participants.



23. Hatcher ordained, Dumas Church, Dumas.



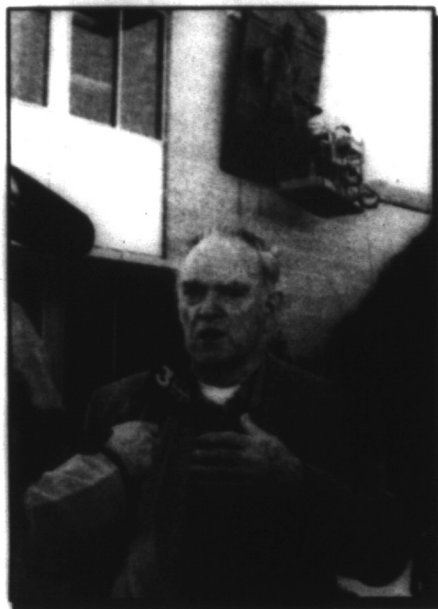
24. Deacon ordinations, Williamsville Church, Williamsville



25. Centrifuge attendees, Neshoba Church, Neshoba Association

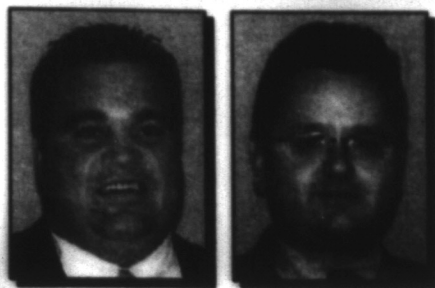


26. Mission Friends, Indian Springs Church, Laurel



1. Sculpture unveiled, MC

1. Moses the Lawgiver, a 12-ft. tall, 2,700 lb. bronze sculpture by Mississippi College art professor Samuel L. Gore, was mounted on a classroom building at the MC School of Law Oct. 12. The bronze was officially unveiled Oct. 24. The work is the largest of Gore's career. Shown is Gore with the sculpture.
2. Mississippi College presented the Ernest Pinson Memorial Scholarship to Kevin Nelson, Jackson and Charles Yates, Raymond.
3. William Carey University will offer a unique, hands-

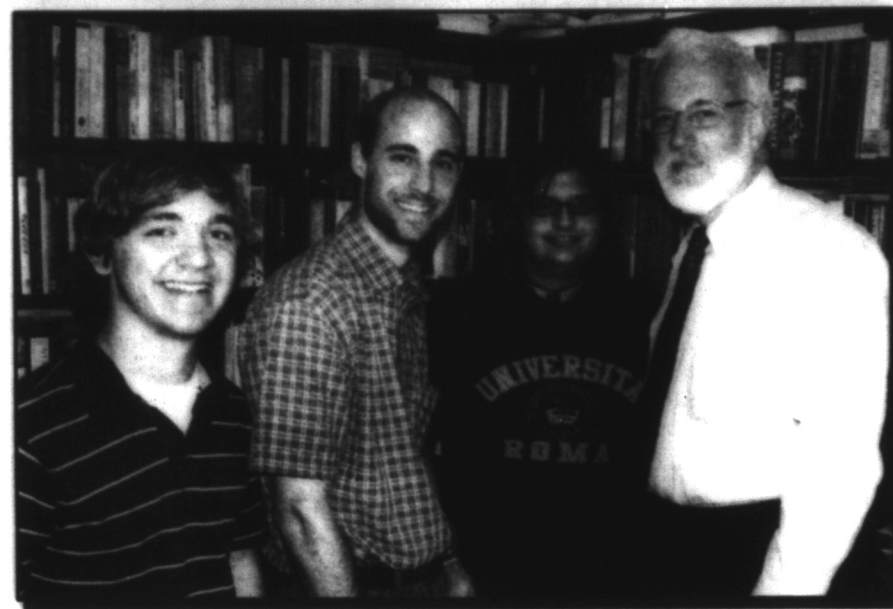


2. Nelson and Yates, MC

on field lab course during the new J-Term which will begin Jan. 2, 2008. Tropical Field Biology (BIO 4900) is a 4 credit hour class that will be taught in Guatemala's Rio Dulce and Lake Izabel watershed January 2 through 9. Students will explore the tropical ecology of Guatemala while visiting lush rainforests, rolling rivers, mysterious caves and beautiful wildlife. Space is only available for 20 students, and first preference is given to WCU students. The course is designed for science majors, but is open to non-science majors, especially education majors. Non-Carey students interested in the course can contact the WCU admissions department at (601) 318-6103 to find out how to enroll as a non-degree seeking student and to find out if the course will transfer. Passports and current vaccinations are required. For

more information contact Lynn Singletary at lynn.singletary@wmcarey.edu or (228) 313-5518.

4. William Carey University students can now study at the Texas Tech University Center in Seville, Spain. Under a recent agreement, WCU became a consortium member of the Center where three WCU students have registered for the Spring 2008 term. Micah Burns of Pace, Fla; Jerrel Miller of McComb; and Rebecca Use of Watson, La. are pictured here with G. Douglas Inglis, director of the Texas Tech University Center in Seville, Spain were the Carey students will attend classes in the Spring 2008.



4. Students study in Spain, WCC

5. Barbara Holland, assistant professor of English in the Department of Language and Literature at Blue Mountain College, was selected as the College's 2007 Humanities Teacher Award recipient. Holland, who joined the Blue Mountain College faculty in 2006, presented a public forum on



5. Holland

September 23 entitled Connecting the Dots: Literary Discussion Across the Great Divide which reflected on her belief that free and open discussions of literary texts fosters thoughtful reflection, tolerance, and creativity.

6. Five William Carey University nursing students received \$6,000 RN Teaching Stipends from the Mississippi Nursing Educators Foundation's Nurses Touch Lives car tag program. The students were among 5,498 nurses who paid \$31 extra for their car tags.

Nurses receiving stipends from Carey are Mary Hays and Kelly Williamson of Hattiesburg, Jill Olsen of Gautier, Sandra Thomas of Chunky, and Andrea Walker of Gulfport.

7. William Carey University Office of Admissions will host Sader Tours November 9 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. for interested students on the Hattiesburg campus. Students interested in Sader Tours can call (800) 962-5991, ext. 103. No reservations are required for the Nov. 9 tour.

HOMEcomings & REVIVALS

First Church, Fannin: Revival, Nov. 4-7; Sun., 8:30 and 10:50 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; supper 5:30-6:30 p.m.; Bill Patterson, speaker; Curtis Carter, music.

LeMoyné Blvd. Church, Biloxi: Revival, Nov. 5, 12, 19, and 26, 6:15 p.m.; John Turner, Robbie Howard, and Chuck Register, speakers; Justin Belew, concert, Nov. 12.

Zion Hill Church, Wesson: Revival, Nov. 11-14; Sun., 10:45 a.m.; nightly, 6:45 p.m.; Ray Cummings, speaker; Joseph Oster, music; Tom McCormick, pastor.

Salem Church, Philadelphia: Revival, Nov. 11 - 14; Sun., 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Curt Pace, speaker; Steve and Becky Carver, music; Duaine P. Morgan, pastor.

Fairview Church, Indianola: Homecoming, Nov. 18; services, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch.

Plainway Church, Laurel: Revival, Nov. 11 - 14; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 6:30 p.m.; Hardy Denham, speaker; Currie Page, music; Nonnie Jefcoat, pastor.

Phillipston Church, Sidon: Revival, Nov. 9 - 11; Sun., concert, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; nightly, 7 p.m.; C.C. Burns, speaker and music; George Mims, pastor.

Galilee Church, Rankin Association: Revival, Nov. 4 - 7; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon., 7:30 p.m. with guest Barbie Bassett; Tues. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Curtis Herrington, speaker; Hosanna, music.

First Bellevue Church, Hattiesburg: Homecoming, Nov. 4; services 10:15 a.m., followed by potluck lunch; Ross Patterson, speaker; Troy Carter, music.

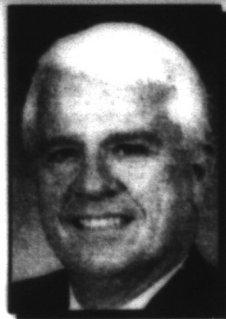
North Columbia Church, Columbia: Revival, Nov. 4 - 7; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Don Taylor, speaker; Price Harris, music; Mike Grenn, pastor.

First Church, Lauderdale: Homecoming, Nov. 11; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Ryan Culpepper, speaker and pastor; Tom Harrison, music.

First Church, Nicholson: 44th Santa Rosa Church reunion, Nov. 11, 12:30 p.m. Bring picnic lunch.

STAFF CHANGES

1. DeSoto Church, DeSoto, has called Keith Tankersley as pastor. He comes with his wife Tina and children Carolyn, Brandon, and Cameron.
2. Tommy Winders, formerly of First Church, Fulton, became pastor of Carrollton Church, Carrollton, Al., on July 29. He can be reached at (205) 367-8424.
3. New Henleyfield Church, Carriere, has called Drew Dabbs as pastor. He is shown with his wife Emily.



2. Winders



1. Tankersley and family



3. Drew and Emily Dabbs

JUST FOR THE RECORD



27. Brotherhood donation, DeSoto Church, Shubuta



28. Pastor Mark Dearman, Stepping Stone Church, Port Gibson



29. Missions Project, New Liberty Church, Branch



30. Deacon Ordination, Easthaven Church, Brookhaven

27. The Brotherhood of DeSoto Church, Shubuta, recently donated \$200 to the DeSoto Fire Department. Shown is Dick Younger, left, presenting the check to chief Steve Glass.

28. Stepping Stone Church, Port Gibson, met and doubled its goal of \$1000 for the Margaret Lackey State Missions offering in September. Shown is pastor Mark Dearman wearing the commemorative hat.

29. Members from New Liberty Church, Branch, joined efforts with LeMoyne Boulevard Church, D'Iberville, in rebuilding homes and lives on the Gulf Coast. Shown are some of the participants.

30. Easthaven Church, Brookhaven, recently ordained Mike Farnham as deacon. Shown, front, are DeeDee Farnham, Farnham, and pastor Danny Singleton.

31. Bethel Church, Hazlehurst, recognized and honored Christine Hemphill Oct. 14 upon her retirement after serving 16 years as church treasurer. Shown are Hemphill and pastor Del Gann.

32. Jericho Church, Guntown, ordained Billy Roberts as deacon Sept. 23. Shown are pastor Marvin Robbins, Roberts, and Karen Roberts.

33. Sylvarena Church, Wesson, ordained Travis Walker Oct. 15. Shown are pastor Stuart Givens, Walker, and Diane Walker.

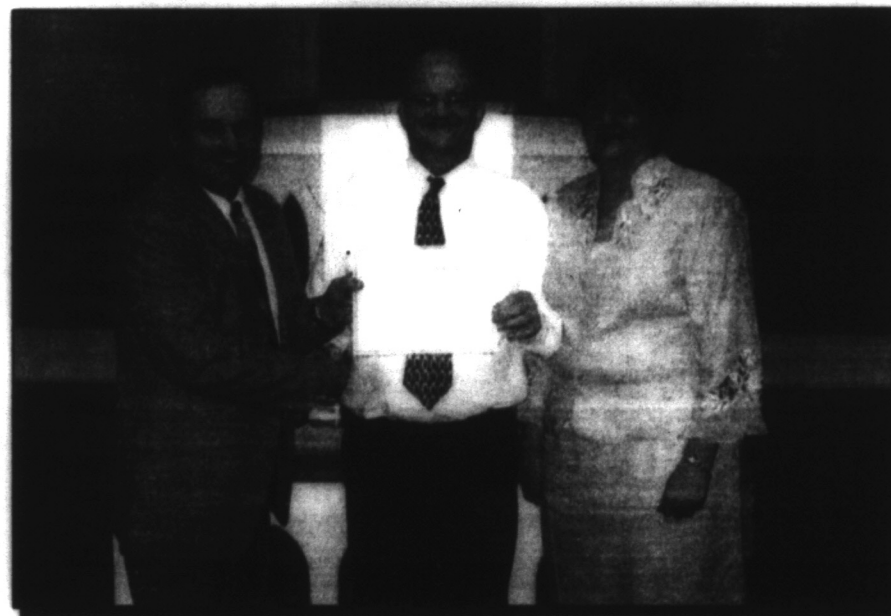
34. Members of the Lakeshore Church, Jackson, Ladies Prayer and Praise wrapped boxes to be used to send items for this year's Operation Christmas Child. Shown, from left, are Ann Broom, Bobbie Harris, and Fay Barlow, with other members.

35. First Church, Marion, is hosting a fall festival Nov. 3, 1-6 p.m., with food and concessions, auction, games, activities, inflatables, and other events. BBQ plates, \$5. For more information, call (601) 485-9503.

36. Fernwood Church, Fernwood, is hosting a Thanksgiving/Christmas banquet Nov. 10, 6 p.m. Free. The church is also hosting a children's movie evening, Nov. 16, 6 p.m.



31. Hemphill recognized, Bethel Church, Hazlehurst



32. Deacon Ordination, Jericho Church, Guntown



33. Ordination, Sylvarena Church, Wesson



34. Operation Christmas Child, Lakeshore Church, Jackson

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Seeking Your Father's Approval

Matthew 6:1-18

By Alice Smith

Who do you think would be most likely to hear God say, "Well done, good and faithful servant?" What would it take for God to say that to me? This lesson will answer both of these questions. It has to do with the "heart," a heart like His.

In 6:1-18, Jesus looked at the way the people were expressing their devotion to God through the practices of charitable giving, prayer, and fasting. These are all significant and meaningful expressions of authentic religion. Let us see what Jesus has to say about our offerings of worship in these forms.

In 1-4, as we look at the practice of "Giving," Jesus makes it clear that God will not reward acts done from a motive of wanting to be noticed or honored by

men. The only reward a person can expect from that form of giving is the reward of the empty praise of men. So, if these acts are done as a performance to attract attention, then when that person is recognized for his acts he should enjoy it because that is all he will get for his "performance." We can be sure from the scripture that God did not honor it or receive it. Acts of giving from a selfish motive of self-seeking and desiring the recognition of others denigrates our worship of Holy God and makes it count for nothing. Our motive for giving must be done only to bring honor to Him and is solely for His approval. God honors giving that is done in secret, not for the notice of men.

In 5-15, we examine "Prayer." Within these verses is the beautiful



Smith

Model Prayer (vs. 9-13). Space limitation prevents a detailed study of this in this commentary.

Again, Jesus tells us that we must not pray for "show," to be seen by people so they will see how pious we are. God does not honor hypocritical words and actions that are done for our glory and not His.

He says to go to a private place and pray to your Father. Herbert Lockyer said, "Christ taught His own to approach God not as beggars but as worshippers." God knows what we need before we ask Him. Christ is not forbidding sincere repetition in prayer. Jesus prayed three times in the Garden of Gethsemane that God would let the cup pass from Him if it was His Will; but He does warn against "meaningless repetition" in order to heap up many words for the purpose of impressing God (and others). Meaningful public prayer is good and necessary. God honors those that are sincere and from the heart.

The Broadman Commentary says "It is not our function to inform God, for he already knows what we need before we ask him." He does not have to be persuaded, for He already is concerned for our good. Then why pray? Prayer's purpose is not to inform God or change His Will. It is not that God needs to be asked, but that we need to ask. Prayer is communion with God in which we are brought into new relationships and new attitudes, thus opening the way for blessings which God already purposed to impart.

At the conclusion of the Model Prayer, in verses 14-15, Jesus emphasizes the importance of forgiveness. If we do not forgive others, God will not forgive us. "God expects those who experience His forgiveness to practice forgiveness. Forgiving others shows that God's grace is at work in us. Failing to forgive others demonstrates that one has not experienced God's forgiveness." (Lifeway)

Verses 16-18, Fasting (self-denial before God): Once again,

Jesus cautions against making an outward show of your fasting, looking weak and drawn so that you have an opportunity to brag about it. Instead, he says to dress up and fix your hair so that no one would ever suspect what you are doing. The humility with which you conduct your fasting before God should be kept secret from people, otherwise it becomes a display and your humility is a sham.

The answer to both of the questions asked at the beginning of this commentary is:

The ones who will experience God's approval and who will receive the highest rewards in heaven are the ones who will be unaware that they did anything at all that deserved meritorious recognition. Humbleness of heart, genuineness of spirit, and a deep and abiding love for God, having no thought of man's approval and applause — that is what God seeks from us.

Smith is a member of First Church, Jackson.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

A Caring Community

Matthew 18:6-7, 10-22

By Michael Smith

On December 10 of each year, the Nobel Prize is awarded to men and women for outstanding achievement in the disciplines of physics, chemistry, medicine, literature, and peace (www.nobel-prize.org). When you and I think of the people who have made the greatest difference in the world we often think of Nobel Prize winners. Though you may have never won a Nobel Prize, you possess great potential to greatly impact the world. You have an undeniable capacity to make a difference in the lives of the many people who populate your family, your workplace, your community, and your church. The power to impact others is manifested by the practice of caring for others. In our lesson passages for the week, Jesus teaches that true greatness is not determined

by how others treat you, but how you treat others.

Caring through Influence (Matthew 18:6-7)

You possess great potential to impact others by your influence. You may not consider yourself an influential person, but you do possess the power to influence others by providing an example of godly living and godly speech. Jesus' life lessons found in Matthew 18 are prompted by the disciples immature jockeying for greatness (Matthew 18:1). The disciples desired greatness because they thought they were destined for greatness. However, their notion of greatness was based on the principle of self-centered delusions of grandeur rather than the principle of humble sacrifice and service. When the disciples desired greatness, Jesus demanded an example. Jesus taught the disciples that



Smith

greatness is not determined by how others treat you, but how you influence others. Great disciples provide a great example for others. Jesus taught the disciples about the importance of positively influencing others. You can dramatically impact your world if

you make the effort to positively influence others with a holy lifestyle and with loving words.

Caring through Attention (Matthew 18:10-14)

You possess great potential to impact others by offering your time and attention. You may not consider yourself an important person, but you most certainly are important to someone. When the disciples desired greatness, Jesus demanded concern for others. Jesus taught the disciples that greatness is not determined by how others treat you, but how you concern yourself with the needs of others. Great disciples are concerned with others. Jesus warned the disciples not to disregard others. He reminded the disciples that

the Lord cares for people just as a protective shepherd cares for his sheep. Disciples should concern themselves with the needs of others because God concerns himself with the needs of others. You can dramatically impact your world if you take time to invest your time and your life in the lives of others.

Caring through Reconciliation (Matthew 18:15-20)

You possess great potential to impact others by restoring broken relationships. You may not consider yourself a patient person, but you do possess the power to exhibit patience when reconciling with others. When the disciples desired greatness, Jesus demanded patience. Jesus taught the disciples that greatness is not determined by how others treat you, but how you reconcile with others. Great disciples treat others with patience. Jesus warned the disciples against writing people off when they treat you badly. Rather than the quick fix of bitterness and resentment, Jesus taught the disciples a sure-fire plan of reconciliation. You can dramatically impact your world if you make

the effort to practice Jesus' plan of reconciliation.

Caring through Forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-22)

You possess great potential to impact others by forgiving those who wrong you. You may not consider yourself an extraordinary person, but you do possess the extraordinary power of forgiveness. When the disciples desired greatness, Jesus demanded forgiveness. Jesus taught the disciples that greatness is not determined by how others treat you, but how you forgive others. Great disciples treat others with forgiveness. In light of Jesus' sure-fire plan for reconciliation, Peter questions the demanding nature of Jesus' plan. "How many times could my brother sin against me and I forgive him?" (Matthew 18:21) Jesus' response indicates that the practice of forgiveness is a perennial practice. You can dramatically impact your world if you make the effort to forgive others when they wrong you.

Smith is pastor of Bethel Church, Monticello.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will

be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be

clear, sharp, and well-lighted. **Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.**

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST
Record



WAITING TO RETURN — A line of cars of residents wait for their turn to seek permission to check whether their homes were spared or charred by Southern California's wildfires. California Southern Baptists have responded to the disaster by activating their mass feeding units for the thousands of victims of the wildfires. (BP photo by Martin Davis)

So. Baptists spring to action during California fires

SAN DIEGO (BP) — Calmer winds allowed firefighters to make progress in battling the Southern California wildfires that have destroyed nearly 1,600 homes, and Southern Baptist disaster relief workers began to shift the focus of their efforts.

"Things are getting much better," Don Hargis, disaster relief coordinator for the California Southern Baptist Convention (CSBC), said. "The winds are down this morning, and we're getting back to only the prevailing westerly winds."

Hargis said Baptist volunteers expected to prepare 10,000 meals Thursday at the feeding kitchens set up at PETCO Park, home of the San Diego Padres. "We closed the fixed feeding unit at Newhall in [northern Los Angeles County] and are deploying a mobile field kitchen to the San Bernardino Fairgrounds, where there's a large evacuee population," Hargis said.

Two other feeding units are on standby status in northern California in case they're needed, Hargis said, and shower units now have been deactivated because most of the evacuation centers are schools and other buildings with existing shower facilities. According to CNN, only about 19,000 evacuees remained in shelters on Thursday as others were staying in hotels or with family and friends.

"Now what we need are clean-up teams," Hargis said. "We're not looking for chainsaw teams. Those are not needed in fire disasters. We need light equipment like Bobcats, backhoes and front-end skid-loaders to do things like take down chimneys."

Hargis said during Southern California's last bout with wildfires in 2003, California Southern Baptist disaster relief crews cleaned 600 homes, and he expects they'll do about the same number this time. "We just don't go in and pick up the ashes. It's much more complicated than that. We leave what the homeowner wants to be left, and that's usually just a concrete slab. We have to collect and cut up all the home's metal and put it in dumpsters. We have to double-bag hazardous materials like asbestos."

Hargis said crews even go in first and sift ashes to find any of the family's jewelry or coins that may have survived the fire.

No Southern Baptist churches were reported damaged by the fires, though thousands of homes and other properties remained threatened. The death toll rose to eight on Thursday, and President Bush arrived for aerial and ground tours of the damage, which includes more than 460,000 acres burned. Before leaving Washington, he reiterated that the federal government is sending recovery resources.

"It's a sad situation out there in Southern California," Bush said. "I fully understand the people have got a lot of anguish in their hearts. They just need to know a lot of folks care about them."

Martin Davis, a graphic designer in San Diego and member of the SBC Executive Committee, told Baptist Press he witnessed firsthand the kindness of homeowners toward the firefighters that saved their houses. Davis, whose home and business survived the fires, said he was standing with some firefighters around 9 p.m. after they had been battling blazes since five o'clock that morning.

For those whose homes didn't survive, Davis said people walked by him with blank stares on their faces, shocked by the news. Crisis counselors were available,

he said. "Pray that people's hearts would be open to what God wants to share with them," Davis said. "I think the opportunity is coming for us to be able to connect with people on that by saying, 'Let us share with you something that you can't lose.'"

"In yesterday's paper it said it didn't matter what your zip code was, we're all in this together," he added. "I think the thing people are learning is it doesn't matter who you are and what you've got. Devastation can come no matter what."

For those dealing with loss and for emergency personnel working toward establishing order in Southern California, Southern Baptist disaster relief workers continue to prepare meals. Chuck Erikson, associate disaster relief coordinator for California, told Baptist Press things were "pretty busy" at PETCO Park as volunteers prepared the noon meal consisting of chicken a la king and rice with salad and pudding on Thursday.

Davis, the Executive Committee member, said Hargis, California Baptists' chief relief coordinator, resembled an orchestra conductor at PETCO Park as he gave orders and workers scurried to respond. "There were people who had done it so much that they were in a groove and it was working," Davis said. "The Red Cross people were following in line, doing the things they were instructed to do, and the food just started going out from the place. I was extremely impressed by that and what God is doing through that."

Hargis said he hopes their work points people to Jesus. "From a spiritual standpoint, we hope we're able to make such an impact in peoples' lives that they will see God getting the glory," Hargis said. "Just like it says in James 2, what good is it if all you do is say, 'God bless you,' and move on when people have a real physical need?"

"After we meet their physical needs, that opens the doors to share the hope in Jesus Christ," Hargis said. "You know, anyone can give help. Christians can give hope."

The California Southern Baptist Convention, North American Mission Board, and the San Diego Baptist Association each contributed \$1,000 in hunger relief funds for the Set Free drug/alcohol rehabilitation program in San Diego, according to Terry Barone, leader of the communications group for the CSBC. The two ranches had evacuated 400 people, including 100 children, and were struggling to feed everyone.

Donations for disaster relief efforts are needed. Online donations can be made at www.csbc.com or donations by check can be sent to CSBC, Disaster Relief, 678 E Shaw Ave, Fresno 93710. Also, donations may be made at www.namb.net.



BAPTISTS RESPOND — Two California Southern Baptist disaster relief workers help prepare the 10,000 meals distributed from their feeding units, based at the San Diego Padres' PETCO Park, to evacuees and emergency workers amid Southern California's wildfire crisis. (BP photo by Martin Davis)

THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

SINCE 1877

BER 8, 2007

VOL. 131

No. 44

NOV 27 2007



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Messengers united on record budget

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Messengers to the 172nd annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) October 30-31 at Frist Church, Jackson, unanimously adopted a record Cooperative Program (CP) budget and chose a new president by acclamation.

The 2008 CP budget of \$34,263,763 reflects an overall 3.24% increase over the current budget, with giving to Southern Baptist Convention causes also increasing 3.24% to \$11,992,317, and remaining steady at 35% of the total budget.

The ministries of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, such as church planting, collegiate ministry, and stewardship, will receive an increase of 3.57% to \$12,808,144, or 37.37% of the total budget. Mississippi institutions and agencies, such as the Baptist Children's Village and the Board of Ministerial Education, will receive a 3.13% increase over last year, for a total of \$8,479,302, or 24.75% of the total budget.

Church Retirement and Protection will be unchanged in the new budget at \$984,000, or 2.88% of the total budget.

Weldon Aultman, a member of First Church, Indianola, and chairman of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) budget committee, presented the 2008 Mississippi Cooperative Program budget to messengers.

Mickey Dalrymple, pastor of Fairview



ELECTED TO SERVE — Newly-elected officers of the Mississippi Baptist Convention for 2007-08 include (from left): Michael Weeks, assistant recording secretary and pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch; Gus Merritt, recording secretary and retired pastor from Newton; David Hamilton, first vice president and pastor of West Heights Church, Pontotoc; Mickey Dalrymple, president and pastor of Fairview Church, Columbus; and Steve Mooneyham, second vice-president and missions director for Gulf Coast Association in Gulfport. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Church, Columbus, was chosen by acclamation as the new MBC president during the first session of the annual meeting on October 30. Dalrymple's election is the fifth consecutive time the MBC president has been elected by acclamation.

Dalrymple was nominated by P.J. Scott, pastor emeritus of First Church, Olive Branch. The nomination was seconded by Steve Jackson, pastor of McLaurin Heights Church, Pearl.

At the time of his election, Dalrymple was serving as president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville. He succeeds two-term MBC President Clarence Cooper, pastor of Emmanuel Church, Grenada.

David Hamilton, pastor of West Heights Church, Pontotoc, was elected October 30 as the new MBC first vice-president. He replaces Joel Medina, pastor of Iglesia Internacional Las Americas Church, Carthage, and the first-ever Hispanic MBC officer, who is completing his second term as first vice-president.

Hamilton defeated Tommy King, president of Baptist-affiliated William Carey University in Hattiesburg, by a vote of 370-160.

Hamilton, who was serving as MBC second vice-president at the time of the election, was nominated by Matt Buckles, pastor of First

Church, Vicksburg. The nomination was seconded by Greg Herndon, pastor of First Troy Church, Pontotoc.

King was nominated by Ken Cook, a member of First Church, Brandon. The nomination was seconded by Glenn Davis, pastor of First Church, Sumrall.

Steve Mooneyham, missions director for Gulf Coast Association in Gulfport, was elected second vice-president over Truman Scarborough, missions director for Yalobusha Association in Water Valley, by a vote of 240-221.

Mooneyham was nominated by Paul Crowley, pastor of Woolmarket Church, Biloxi. The nomination was seconded by Stephen Lanier, pastor of Gulfport Heights Church, Gulfport.

Scarborough was nominated by Daniel Hathorne, pastor of First Church, Bruce. The nomination was seconded by Bryan Bailey, pastor of First Church, Coffeeville.

Longtime MBC Recording Secretary Gus Merritt, a retired pastor from Newton, and Assistant Recording Secretary Michael Weeks, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch, were reelected by acclamation.

Jimmy Porter, CAC executive director, told messengers that the Memorial to the Missing, Mississippi Baptist's campaign to memorialize the fifty million babies who have been aborted since the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion during all nine months of pregnancy in its 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling, has almost reached its goal of fifty million pennies.

— Please turn to MBC, page two

Site Committee announced

A Site Selection Committee for Future Conference Ministry Development in Mississippi was announced by Clarence Cooper, outgoing president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and pastor of Emmanuel Church, Grenada, on October 31 during the second day of the 2007 MBC annual meeting at First Church Jackson.

Cooper tapped Lloyd Sweatt, pastor of Meadowood Church, Amory, to serve as chairman. Joining Sweatt on the committee are:

- Weldon Aultman, member of First Church, Indianola.
- Buddy Huff, member of First Church, Jackson.
- Bobby Kirk, member of Roundaway Church, Doddsville.
- Mark Mayo, pastor of West Carthage Church, Carthage.
- Gary Richardson, pastor of North Oxford Church, Oxford, and incoming president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).
- Rebecca Williams, member of Broadmoor Church, Madison.

Cooper told messengers the Site Selection Committee is charged with specifically searching for the most desirable and accessible site for developing a conference center for Mississippi Baptists.

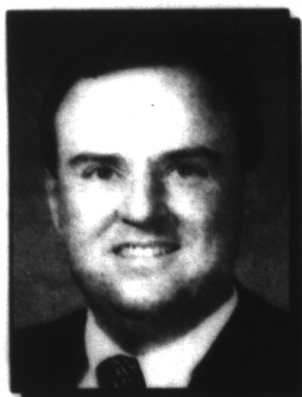
The committee's findings will be brought to the MBCB Executive Committee, Cooper said, and if the Executive Committee agrees to support the committee's findings, the matter will be brought before the full 100-member convention board.

Gulfshore Assembly, which was owned by MBCB and located on the Gulf Coast shoreline at Henderson Point near Pass Christian, was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005. Messengers to the 2006 MBC annual meeting voted to sell the Henderson Point property, and it is currently on the market.

For more information on the Henderson Point Property, visit www.mbc.org.



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Send changes of address to: The
BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530,
Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Send news, communication, and
address changes to: The Editor,
BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530,
Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Tel: (601) 968-3800
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VOLUME 131 • NUMBER 44
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$9.35 per
year payable in advance. Economy plans
available for cooperating Mississippi churches.
Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS.
Member, Association of State Baptist Papers.
Deadlines: News items — one calendar
week prior to requested publication date.
Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to
requested publication date. All submissions
are subject to editing.

Another great annual meeting

As expected, messengers from the cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) acted in harmony to approve yet another record Cooperative Program (CP) budget and elect the convention's top leader by acclamation for the fifth consecutive time.

Those words, "cooperating" and "Cooperative," have a nice ring, don't they? It should be a joy to any observer — and no doubt to the Lord Himself — to see Christians acting like, well, Christians. To God be the glory!

The 172nd annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, meeting October 30-31 at First Church, Jackson, adopted a \$34,263,763 Cooperative Program budget for 2008. That's 3.24% more than the record budget adopted for 2007, and continues a string of record budgets interrupted only by the post-Katrina 2006 CP budget (which simply remained constant at the previous year's budget level.)

Mississippi Baptists are on track to exceed the record 2007 CP budget on their way to 2008, too. To God be the glory!

Messengers elected Mickey Dalrymple, pastor of Fairview Church, Columbus, to the office of MBC president by acclamation. The unanimous selection of Dalrymple was the fifth consecutive year that has happened.

Joel Medina, pastor of Iglesia Internacional Las Americas Church, Carthage, completed his term as MBC first vice-president — the first Hispanic Mississippi Baptist to serve as an MBC officer when he was elected second vice-president a few years ago, and the highest-ranking Hispanic Mississippi Baptist ever to serve when he was elected first-vice president last year.

Joining Dalrymple to lead the convention in the coming year are David Hamilton, first vice-president and pastor of West Heights Church, Pontotoc; Steve Mooneyham, second vice-president and missions director for Gulf Coast Association in Gulfport; Gus Merritt, recording secretary and retired pastor from Newton; and Michael Weeks, assistant recording secretary and pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch.

The convention's leadership is in good hands, and well-represented geographically. Dalrymple is from east Mississippi, Hamilton is from northeast Mississippi, Mooneyham is from south Mississippi, Merritt is from central Mississippi, and Weeks is from north Mississippi.

Outgoing MBC President Clarence Cooper, pastor of Emmanuel Church, Grenada, announced the formation of a committee to begin the process of analyzing the conference needs of Mississippi Baptists and formulating a report on the future of the convention's conference ministries.

The organization of this committee is important and should not be overlooked. In the aftermath of the heartbreaking destruction of Gulfshore Assembly by



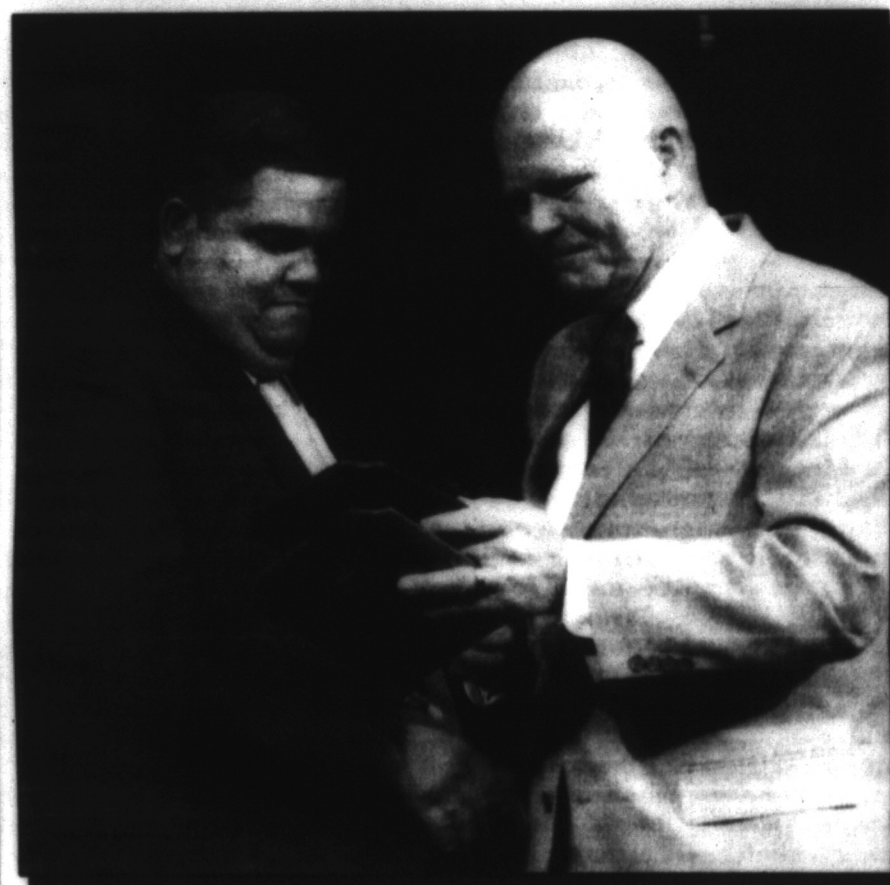
IN SESSION — Messengers to the 2007 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention convened October 30-31 at First Church, Jackson, for the 172nd time in the convention's history. Messengers were unified in endorsing a record Cooperative Program budget for 2008 and selecting a new president. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Hurricane Katrina, the convention has an opportunity to position its conference ministries program to lead all such programs in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Many lives are touched and many souls are saved each year through the convention's conference ministries, so be in prayer every day for this committee and the decisions they will be making under the leadership of the Lord.

There was much more to the MBC annual meeting that space limitations prohibit retelling. There is only one way to get the whole story, and that's to be in attendance. Every Mississippi Baptist should consider becoming a part of their convention's annual meeting. Very few of those who do so, go away disappointed. Come and hear what God is doing in and through the lives of Mississippi Baptists.

See you there next year!



HISTORY MAKER — Joel Medina (left), pastor of Iglesia Internacional Las Americas Church, Carthage, is presented with a plaque of appreciation October 31 by Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, upon completion of Medina's term as first vice-president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC). Medina was the first-ever Hispanic to serve as an MBC officer. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

MBC (continued from page one)

The 46.5 million pennies given so far by Mississippi Baptists rest in a specially-designed, see-through container on the grounds of the Baptist Building in downtown Jackson. When the remaining 3.5 million pennies are given and the total reaches fifty million — one penny for each aborted baby — the Memorial will remain in place for a period of time to remind Mississippians and all America of legalized abortion's toll.

Messengers unanimously approved the lone resolution proposed during the meeting, which expressed appreciation to First Church, Jackson, for hosting the annual meeting. The resolution also thanked the speakers, singers, and instrumentalists; MBC President Clarence Cooper; and "all of the officers, members of all boards, trustees of all agencies and institutions, committee members, and volunteers who have served this Convention faithfully as a labor of love."

The theme of the 2007 MBC annual meeting was, "Ye shall be my witnesses in all Judea..." from Acts 1:8. Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), highlighted the theme when he delivered the MBCB emphasis during the October 30 evening session.

Missions directors for Baptist associations across Mississippi played a large role on the annual meeting's program, in honor of 300-year anniversary of Baptist missions in America.

Gary Richardson, pastor of North Oxford Church, Oxford, preached the convention sermon from 2 Corinthians 12. Richard Blackaby, president of Blackaby International Ministries in Atlanta, presented the series of Bible Treasures.

A total of 979 messengers registered for meeting.

The 2008 MBC annual meeting will be held October 28-29 at First Church, Jackson. Barry Corbett, pastor of First Church, Kosciusko, was chosen to deliver the convention sermon.

So. Baptists helping Ca. wildfires victims

SAN DIEGO (BP) — As Southern Baptist disaster relief crews begin to clean up the charred remains of homes destroyed by wildfires, chaplains will be on site to help Southern California residents process the emotions that accompany loss.

About 500 workers, including Southern Baptists and volunteers from Samaritan's Purse and local churches, were scheduled to clean up the La Jolla Indian Reservation, which was badly burned in San Diego County said, Don Hargis, disaster relief coordinator for the California Southern Baptist Convention.

"We're going to try to clean hopefully as many as 25 home sites," Hargis said, adding that he hopes to have "at least one chaplain with each team so they can be sitting and talking with the homeowner while the homeowner is there watching his or her home site be cleaned up. Sometimes that's very emotional and they just need someone to talk to."

La Jolla is one of the poorest Indian reservations in the area, Hargis noted, because they do not sponsor gambling.

Hargis sent out a call for at least 25 trained Southern Baptist disaster relief chaplains to help in Southern California. He explained there are two kinds of chaplains eligible to work alongside his crews, those who are strictly disaster relief-trained chaplains and those who are more highly trained and endorsed by the North American Mission Board.

The latter kind of chaplains, Hargis said, have undergone training in Critical Incident Stress Management or are approved by the National Organization for Victim Assistance. Others are Southern Baptists trained dually in disaster relief and in chaplaincy.

"All of our kitchens have chaplains there," he said. "We try to have as many as two chaplains at each site, but a lot of our people are cross-trained. They may be cooking in the kitchen, but they also are a chaplain."

Hargis said the cross-trained chaplains have specific jobs while they are not counseling those affected by disaster.

"They are primarily involved with the kitchen crews to make sure that they stay healthy spiritually and physically," Hargis said. "They make sure the blue cap [leader] is operating in an efficient manner spiritually and emotionally, and they make sure everyone gets plenty of rest. Their job is to oversee the spiritual and emotional health of our teams."

If a victim were to walk up



HERE TO HELP — Southern Baptist pastor and sheriff's chaplain Gunnar Hanson (left) meets with evacuees at Valley Center High School. During the wildfires in Southern California, Hanson visited the school regularly, passing along information from the sheriff's department to those who had been evacuated. (BP photo by Meredith Day)

to the kitchen workers with an emotional need, Hargis said the chaplains are instructed to help immediately.

"We'll say to that chaplain, 'You need to go and talk to them right now. Leave whatever you're doing because your primary goal is to be a chaplain.' If they can work in the kitchen, or if they're going to do cleanup, we're asking the chaplains to basically be there to talk to the homeowner, see how they're doing, ask questions that they're trained to ask, and try to help them understand there's hope in Jesus Christ," Hargis said.

Among the opportunities he has had to mention Jesus was an encounter with someone at the Indian reservation Southern Baptists were set to assist.

"The other day I had an opportunity to share God with one of the Indian people that didn't understand why we were coming out for free," he recounted. "I just shared with him a little bit of my testimony and what we're doing."

As far as the need for chaplains goes, Hargis said he knows of at least 400 trained disaster relief chaplains in California alone who should be able to respond, especially for the Indian reservation cleanup.

"This is a one-day thing, but we're hoping this will be the beginning of a lot of cleanup from San Diego all the way up to San Bernardino all the way over to Malibu," Hargis said.

He reported that Southern Baptist chaplains were stationed at Local Assistance Centers in San Diego County, where people go to receive

information about aid and to request crews to help clean up what's left of their homes.

Hargis also gave an update on general disaster relief statistics for Southern California.

"I think right now we have topped the 125,000 meal mark. We still have four kitchens active. We've had as many as 750 volunteer hours, each hour meaning an eight-hour day's work," he said.

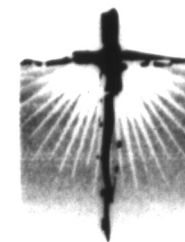
The calculation doesn't mean there have been 750 individual volunteers, Hargis said, but that Southern Baptist workers collectively have clocked 750 volunteer days since efforts began Oct. 22.

After Hargis asked for equipment to begin cleanup efforts, he received eight front-end skid-loaders as well as some heavy equipment

brought in from Long Island, N.Y., by Tad Agoglia of Disaster Relief Clean-up Solutions. Agoglia and some of his employees will join Southern Baptist efforts, Hargis said.

The city of San Diego will not allow nongovernmental organizations to help with cleanup, but San Diego County still is open to outside help, allowing homeowners to choose whether to invite volunteers to assist or use government-sponsored workers, Hargis said.

Individuals interested in serving as volunteers should contact Cathy Glover in Hargis' office at (559) 229-9533, ext. 255, or e-mail cglover@csbc.com. Donations for disaster relief still are needed and may be made at www.csbc.com, or checks may be mailed to CSBC at 678 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno, CA 93710.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND
FRONT PAGE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

NOVEMBER 8, 2007

VOL. 131

No. 44

Looking back

10 years ago

Bob Reccord is inaugurated as the first president of the North American Mission Board. The North American Mission Board received a majority of the ministry assignments of the Home Mission Board, the Radio and Television Commission, and the Brotherhood Commission.

20 years ago

More than 70 Southern Baptists from across the U.S. are appointed to seven subcommittees charged with producing a new hymnal by 1991. Publication will coincide with the Sunday School Board's 100th anniversary and the church music department's 50th anniversary.

30 years ago

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1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my
sins and freedom from eternal
death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose
from the grave to forgive my
sins and to restore my rela-
tionship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus
Christ into my life. From this
time on, I want to live in a lov-
ing relationship with Him. (I
receive Christ as my Savior
and Lord.)

"But as many as received him,
to them he gave the right to become
children of God, even to those who
believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for
Jesus Christ today, contact a
local Baptist church for spiritual
guidance.

SCARY SNAKES

I hate snakes. Slithering, silent, slick, and to me scary snakes make my skin crawl. I can see one on the road and it bothers me. I can see one in a zoo through a thick glass and it makes me cringe. I do not like snakes. I am not sure why I have such a detest for and sometimes fear of snakes. Maybe it is because the first one ever mentioned in the Bible is doing harm to the human race, and I have lived with an awareness of his cunning, seductive manners. Maybe it is because when I was growing up my parents told me, "Don't go out there in those weeds or woods because there may be snakes out there." You could not see them, hear them, or smell them, but they would do you harm. It really does not matter what kinds of snakes they are — long or short ones, fat or skinny ones, colored or camouflaged, alive or dead. They bother me.

Just recently, I had an encounter with a snake. I had gone out for my early morning exercise and I ran into a snake. Since it is usually dark when I go out I generally follow the same path and pattern because it is familiar to me and I know where the bumps and dips are in the road. On this particular morning I was almost back home when I almost stepped on a snake in the road. Seeing the snake just before my foot hit the pavement I missed it by only a couple of inches. It scared me out of my skin. I had moved past it five or ten feet, turned around, looked at it closely, and realized that the snake was dead. Somebody had run over the snake in the road and actually, it was pretty much a flattened skin of a snake. To be honest that did not alleviate my terror one bit and I went on to the house. A dead snake had ruined a wonderful morning sunrise and the beginning of a beautiful day. As the day wore on my anxieties subsided. Life was filled with so many other people and things that I totally forgot about the snake in the road. The next morning I was up and at it again. I went out for my morning exercise and was almost back home when I almost stepped on the snake again. It was still dead and it still scared the heebie-jeebies out of me. On day three I headed out early with everything under control. I



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

remembered that there was a snake in the road out there on the way home, and this time I was committed to overcoming any fears even if it took going on the other side of the road and just looking at him as I passed by. It was a beautiful day. As I walked and saw God's beautiful creation coming to life, I forgot all about the snake. Lo and behold for the third straight day I almost stepped on that rascal.

Now it was getting serious. The snake, dead as he was, had become such a painful part of my life that I had to do something. I must either stop going out there and passing him or in some way get rid of him, or just realize that he was dead and he was not going to bother me. None of those options seemed to fit very well and so day four I just in passing thought about the snake and headed out to exercise. So help me on this day while a hundred cars had probably run over him, I stepped on him and it scared me so bad I could literally feel the fear coming up through my foot. I went on and dealt with life and its experiences throughout the day thinking that on day five things would be different. I thought about the snake when I started out. I thought about him all through my walk and when I got almost to him I could see him out there in my pathway. He was as flat as a pancake and as lifeless as a rock, but I was going to deal with this issue. I got me a stick and I picked up the skin of the snake and tossed him into some bushes away out of my way. I have not seen or heard from him since. He is gone!

After almost a week of trying to overcome a dead snake affecting my wits and feelings, I began to realize how difficult it is for some folks. I have spent a good deal of my time, energy, and ministry trying to help people understand that you do not have to be shaped in the future by the things in the past that have been put to death and set aside by the power

of Jesus Christ. I recognize that sin has consequences and that the fearful things of the past and the ghosts and demons that come out of the closets of life can scare you, but Jesus died for all of our sins, gives us a new life, and enables us to move forward. I know that and you know that. Then all of a sudden out there on the roadway of life, we run across one of the skins of one of the snakes of some tragic memory — a broken relationship, a shattered dream, a wrong decision, or a sinful act and we are momentarily shocked and electrified by what we see and feel. Just as I knew without any doubt that the snake could not hurt me it always came as a jolt to my system to see him there again in the shadowy morning light. It is amazing how things out of our past just seem to hang around and from time to time give us a shock.

I have been out of college for decades and just recently I saw a lady that she and I had taken Spanish together in college. In all of my years in college and the courses I took, nothing gave me so much anxiety and tortured me so as the two years that I studied Spanish. In two years of Spanish classes I was the only male in the group and except for one or two

others everybody in our class had taken Spanish one or two years in high school. That means the day we started I was two years behind everybody else in the room, and I confess to you right now I never caught up. Our teacher was in her 80's, weighed less than a hundred pounds, and was soft spoken, but to this day I can see her look at me, instruct me to go to the board for class work, and I would nearly pass out. While that professor has been with the Lord for many years, please understand that I am not saying that she is one of the snakes in my life, but I will say that the skin of that memory continues to be with me and will no doubt hover around until I depart this life. By God's grace and the help of kind and loving folks through the years, I have learned to deal with my lack of ability in Spanish.

Let me tell you that you too can move on down the road of life in spite of some of the hurts, scars, fears, and skins that are left behind. Maybe you can get them out of the way and throw them out of the pathway of your journey. Remember that God will forgive your sin and He will bury them in the depths of the sea and cast them as far as the east is from the west and He will remember them no more. Hold your head up, move ahead, and serve the Lord. Live life to its fullest and do not be fearful or frustrated with the skins of dead snakes in your roadway. God bless you!

The author may be contacted at
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Former pornographer repents, helps others

NEWPORT, Tenn. (BP) — Two years ago, Michele Washam had been known for launching a pioneering pornographic website for women in 1995.

Then the Baptist & Reflector newspaper of the Tennessee Baptist Convention updated her story: After giving her life to Christ, Washam had changed her Just4Ladies.com website into a Christian ministry to help women and men who have been hurt by pornography and other issues in their relationships. She also had taken a job as a secretary at West End Church in Newport, Tn.

The article told of Washam's struggles and of her remorse for contributing to people becoming addicted to pornography. Two years ago she said, "I have forgiven myself because I know the Lord has forgiven me, and I am doing my best to make up for it."

Since then Washam has kept her word. Her website with Christian content now averages more than three million visits every month, with thousands of men and women reached for Christ.

Also, after Baptist Press picked up Washam's story, the article ran in numerous secular and religious publications across the nation and the world, Washam said. She received various requests for interviews about her ministry.

"We were not expecting the response we got from the article," she said. Among those responses was a request from Bridge-Logos, a Christian publisher in Orlando, Fla. Though her ministry was one of marriage restoration, the publisher wanted her to write a book on how families could take steps to protect themselves from the evil of pornography.

Washam and her pastor Tom Mooty were skeptical when first contacted. "We had been told that publishers don't contact authors," Mooty said.

Washam, having self-published one book, knew that finding a publisher was

not easy, but the offer was legitimate. With Mooty's help, Washam began to write from personal experience about Protecting Those You Love in an X-Rated World.

"I have three kids who all fall into the age considered to be pornography's largest group of viewers," Washam said. "I knew I

families. In addition, if porn is already in the home, it gives tips on how to eradicate it."

Keeping pornography out of the home is essential, Washam emphasized.

"Once pornography gets in a marriage, it is definitely a home-wrecker," she said. "My mission is to help save marriages."

Mooty wrote sermon vignettes to complement what Washam wrote. "I gave practical tips while Tom gave it a spiritual focus," she said. "Tom made it credible and validated the book with Scripture."

In addition to the book, the publisher asked Washam to develop a booklet titled "Quick Guide to Home PORNtention: Practical Steps You Can Take to Block Harmful Media and Online Influences," which is free with the purchase of the book.

Key pointers include selecting the proper equipment to block pornography from your home and computer.

The back covers of the book and the booklet tell parents: "This book will be a mighty weapon in your hands to block pornography from your homes and families! What's more, it gives hope and help to those who've been wounded by or addicted to the devastating material."

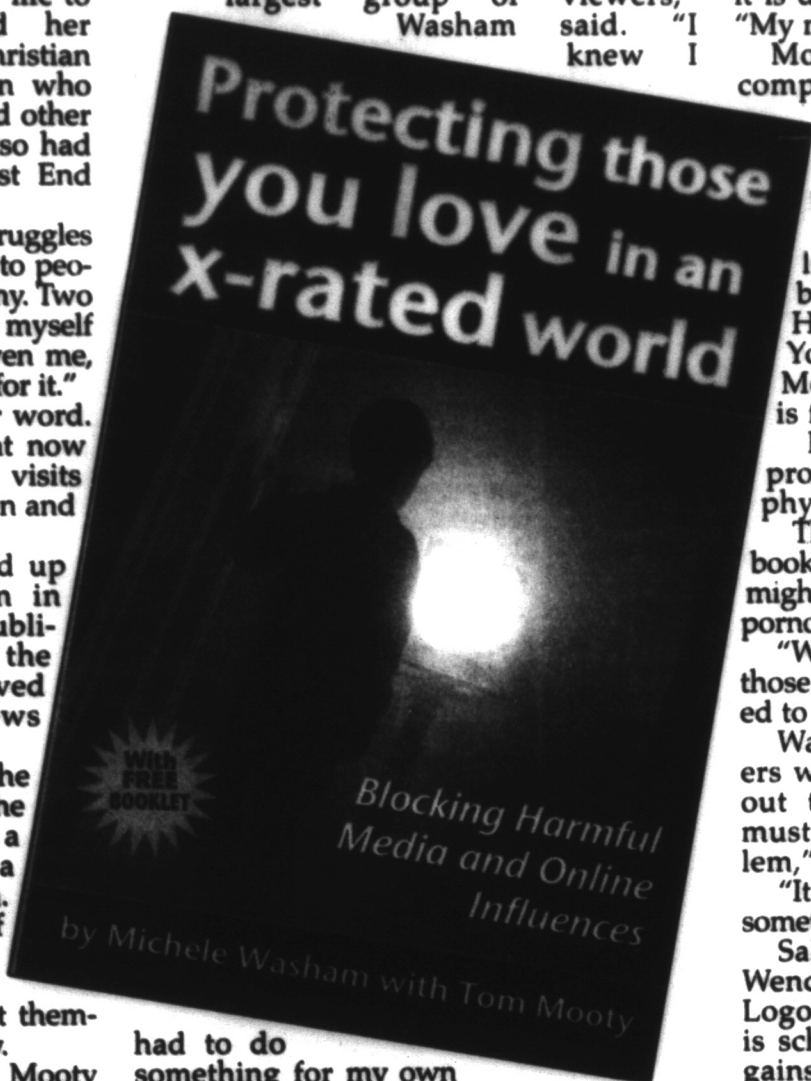
Washam and Mooty hope church leaders will read the book and get the word out to their members. "Our churches must be equipped to deal with this problem," Washam said.

"It is an ugly problem, and we must do something about it and not just talk about it."

Sales of the book have gone well, said Wendy Wood, a publicist with Bridge-Logos, who noted that the book already is scheduled for a second printing as it gains momentum.

"My ministry dealt with marriage restoration. I would not have written a book about porn protection," Washam said regarding the surprise book offer.

"It was definitely God's plan for us."



had to do something for my own kids as well as for other kids."

Too often people talk about the evils of pornography but don't do anything about it, she said, noting, "This book tells you how to keep porn out of your home and

Planned Parenthood hit with 107-count indictment

WASHINGTON (BP) — More than 60 pro-family leaders have signed a letter to senators and representatives asking them to suspend federal funding for Planned Parenthood while a 107-count criminal complaint against the abortion provider's Kansas/Missouri chapter is investigated.

The complaint alleges illegal abortions in violation of either state or federal law by Comprehensive Health of Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri, which is located in Overland Park, Kan. A judge ruled Oct. 17 that there was "probable cause" for the case to proceed.

The case is receiving national attention because, some observers say, it could lead to a new and successful front in pro-lifers' nationwide battle against abortion. Even abortion rights supporters say the charges, if proven true, could have a dramatic impact.

The letter was signed by a number of national pro-family leaders, including Barrett Duke of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Mathew Staver of Liberty Counsel, Wendy Wright of Concerned Women for

America, and Carrie Gordon Earll of Focus on the Family.

"These are substantive charges levied against Planned Parenthood," the letter reads. "States have passed laws on late-term abortions because they are detrimental to women as well as babies. Women are often not informed that late-term abortions increase the likelihood of severe blood loss, damage to vital organs, later premature births and loss of fertility. We urge you to act to ensure that our tax dollars are not subsidizing abortion clinics that perform possibly illegal late-term abortions."

The charges were filed by Johnson County District Attorney Phill Kile, the former Kansas attorney general who was defeated in last year's election — in large part because pro-choice groups heavily funded his opponent. But even though he was beaten, he remains a thorn in the side of abortion rights groups, just as he was as attorney general.

Kile's complaint alleges, among other things, that the local Planned Parenthood:

- performed illegal late-term abortions.

- failed to determine viability of fetuses.

- falsified documents to cover up illegal activity.

Under Kansas' abortion law, a late-term abortion on a viable unborn baby can be performed only if two doctors agree that the abortion is necessary for the woman's physical or mental health, ABCNews.com reported.

"Planned Parenthood operates around 860 facilities around the country, and there are approximately 40 states with laws banning late term abortions," the letter from pro-family groups reads. "This illegal conduct may be happening all over the country."

Columnist Robert D. Novak said the 107-count complaint signals "a new front in the endless abortion wars."

"Antiabortion activists see Kline's prosecution as the springboard for a national campaign," Novak wrote.

The charges have abortions rights leaders concerned, even though they maintain the clinic is innocent. Kansas is home to famous abortion doctor George Tiller, who performs late-term abortions, often on viable unborn babies.

"[Kline's complaints] could affect women all over the country," National Organization for Women President Kim Gandy told ABCNews.com from NOW's Washington D.C. office.

Bibliocipher

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UIK LPSF DPSOO ZF WKI-

UZF S GSA, ZU PB

DPSOO VSZA FPB LPIOB

LIKOT, SAT OIDB PZD ILA

DIMO?

GSKC BZVPF: FPZKFN-DZJ

Clue: K = R

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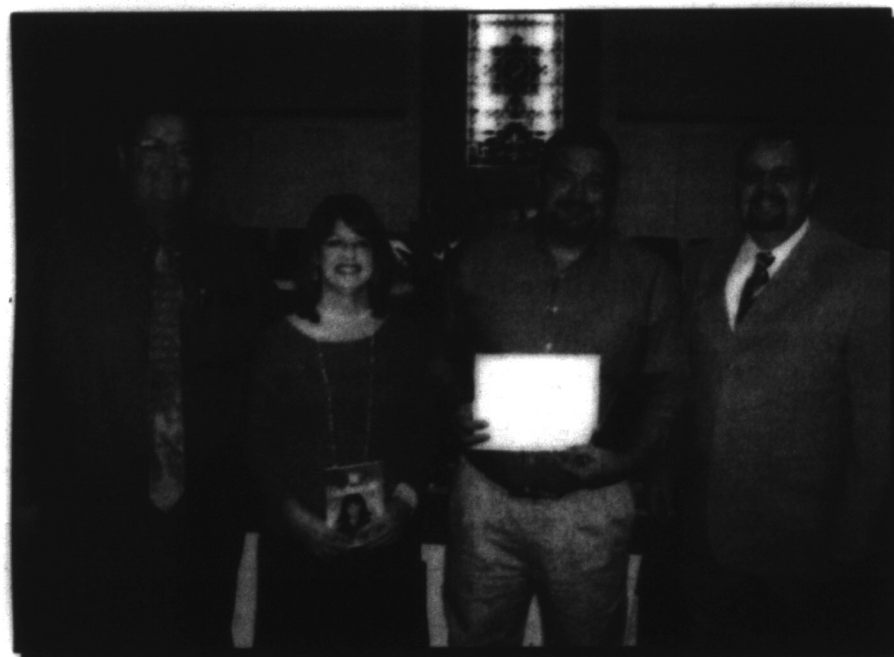
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JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Deacon Ordination, Bogue Chitto Church, Pike County



2. Deacon Ordination, First Church, Byhalia

1. **Bogue Chitto Church, Pike County**, ordained Jack Bacot and Frankie Roberts as deacons Oct. 28. Shown are Belinda Roberts, Roberts, pastor Michael Gibson, Bacot, and Rita Bacot.
2. **First Church, Byhalia**, ordained Tony Caldwell as deacon Oct. 14. Shown are Mike Hamblin, Kim Caldwell, Caldwell, and pastor Anthony Langley.
3. **Shelton Church, Moselle**, celebrated its 100th anniversary Oct. 14 with approximately 350 people in attendance. Shown are William Kilgore, George Berger (Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission representative), and pastor Charles Brady.
4. **First Church, Lexington**, ordained Melon Garret to the gospel ministry Oct. 28. Eric Pratt, Mississippi College, conducted the service. Shown are Keith Leech, Sammy Massey, Garret, and Pratt.
5. Acteens from **Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale**, attended Blume in Kansas City, Mo., this past summer. Shown are the participants.
6. Bruce Robinson was recently ordained to the gospel ministry at **Salem Church, Scott County**, with Larry Duncan presiding.



3. 100th Anniversary, Shelton Church, Moselle



4. Ordinations, First Church, Lexington



5. Acteens, Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale

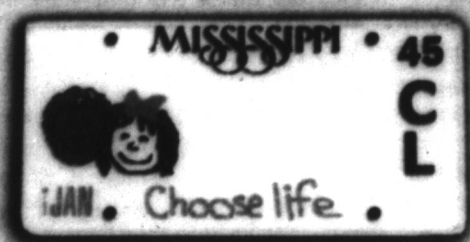


6. Robinson ordained, Salem Church, Scott County

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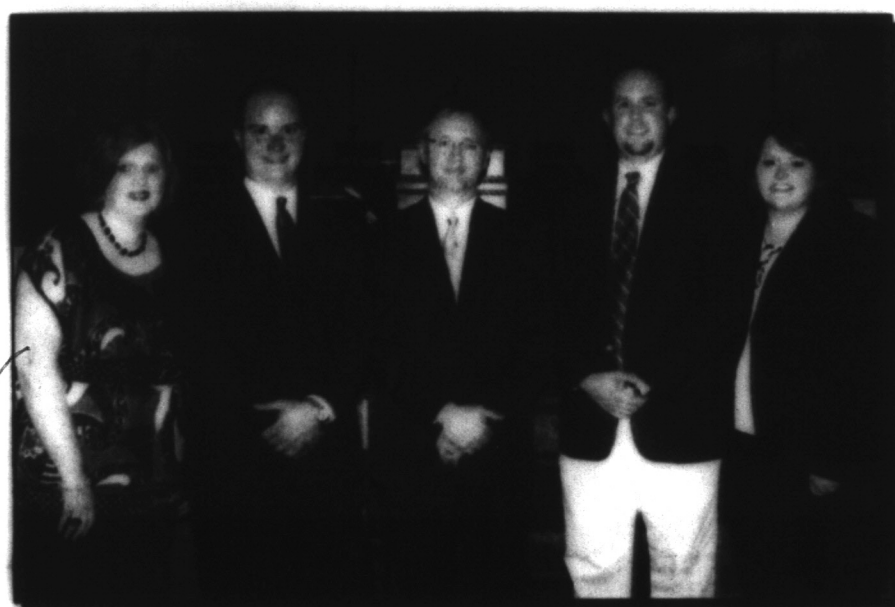
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JUST FOR THE RECORD



10. Perfect Attendance, New Hope Church, Foxworth



11. Deacon Ordinations, Belden Church, Tupelo



12. Deacon Ordination, Crenshaw Church, Panola Assoc.



13. Noteburning, Heritage Heights Church, Laurel

10. **New Hope Church, Foxworth**, had perfect attendance recognition Oct. 28 for those who had perfect Sunday School attendance for the past church year. Shown are those being recognized.

11. **Belden Church, Tupelo**, recently ordained Derek Long and Grant Collins as deacons. Shown are Christy Long, Long, pastor Jim Holcomb, Collins, and Priscilla Collins.

12. **Crenshaw Church, Panola Association**, ordained Sonny Spencer as deacon Oct. 7. Shown, from left, are pastor Justin McLendon, Spencer, B.P. Gates, Franklin Rayburn, Clyde Sellers, and AMD Courtney Selvy.

13. **Heritage Heights Church, Laurel**, burned the note on its building debt Sept. 23, retiring the loan nine years ahead of schedule. Shown are Steven O'Neal, Roger Wade, Dale Bowling, Joyce Regan, Rip Regan, and pastor Ken Regan.

14. **Sand Hill Church of Hesterville, West**, ordained J.W. (Buddy) Ramage, Jeremy Burrell, Mike Howard, and Rodney Vance as deacons. Shown, first photo, are Jean Ramage, Ramage, Brittany Burrell, Burrell, and pastor Ralph Hunt; second photo, Howard, Jeannie Howard, Donna Vance, Vance, and AMD Bobby Waggoner.

15. **Linwood Church, Union**, recently ordained William Weir as deacon. Shown are pastor Mike Skinner, Weir, Alex Weir, Stacie Weir, and Matt Weir.

16. **Cliff Temple Church, Natchez**, met its \$1200 Margaret Lackey State Missions goal. Shown is pastor Russell Wagoner wearing the "missions hat."

17. **New Hope Church, Sumrall**, will host Shallow Creek in concert Nov. 10, 6 p.m.

18. **Oak Grove Church, Meridian**, is hosting a fall festival Nov. 10, 4-6 p.m.

19. **First Church, Rolling Fork**, will host a harvest supper Nov. 11 with the Providentials Quartet, 6 p.m. Call (662) 873-2862 for information.

20. **Fernwood Church, Gulfport** is hosting its Thanksgiving/Christmas banquet Nov. 10, 6 p.m.; a children's movie evening, Nov. 16, 6 p.m.; international missions week, Dec. 2-9; and the annual Christmas musical Dec. 16, 6 p.m.



14. Deacon Ordinations, Sand Hill Church, Hesterville



14. Deacon Ordinations, Sand Hill Church, Hesterville



15. Deacon Ordination, Linwood Church, Union



16. Missions goal exceeded, Cliff Temple Church, Natchez

Homecomings & Revivals

Faith Church, Silver Creek: 25th anniversary and homecoming, Nov. 11; worship, 11 a.m., followed by noon covered dish luncheon and afternoon services and celebration, 1:30 p.m.; Ronald Ballard, pastor; Sue Ballard, music.

East Columbia Church, Columbia: Revival, Nov. 11-14; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 6:30 p.m.; Curtis Roland, speaker; Brad Day, music.

Horseshoe Church, Tchula: Homecoming, Nov. 11; worship and praise, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Sean Tutor, speaker.

Crossroads Church, Petal: Revival, Nov. 11-14; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by fellowship and meal; 7 p.m. nightly; Jerry Purvis, speaker; Libby Purvis, music; Jimmie Windham, pastor.

State Changes

1. **First Church, Itta Bena,** has called Ren Smith as pastor. He has pastored churches in Mississippi and Alabama. A Greenwood native, he received a degree from Delta State University, attended Southwestern Seminary, and is pursuing a Master of Divinity from New Orleans Seminary. He comes with his wife Susie and daughter Morgan.



1. Smith

2. **James E. Griffith,** pastor, Mt. Carmel Church, Neshoba County, has retired after 60 years of preaching. Shown are Clara Nazary Griffith and Griffith.



2. Griffith retires, Mt. Carmel Church, Neshoba County

3. **Central Church, Byram,** has called Arthur L. Land as pastor. Land comes with his wife, Anne, from Delta Church, Yazoo City, and is also employed by Chancellor Funeral Home, Byram and Florence. The Lands have three sons. The church will officially welcome the Lands Nov. 11 with a luncheon after Sunday School (9:50 a.m.) and worship (11 a.m.).

3. Land and wife

4. **First Church, Richland,** has called Tim Tolleson as minister of education. Tolleson and his wife Shelia come from First Church, Picayune.



4. Tolleson

5. **Friendship Church, Aberdeen,** has called Mark Thornton as pastor. Thornton is a native of Stone Mountain, Ga., and he and his wife Rachel have seven children and two grandchildren. He holds degrees from the University of North Alabama and New Orleans Seminary. He has pastored churches in Louisiana, New York, and Alabama. He is a Lt. Colonel in the National Guard and is Brigade Chaplain of the 31st Chemical Brigade in Northport, Ala.



5. Thornton Family

6. **Faith Church, Ovett,** has called James Balliet as pastor. He is the former pastor of Park Haven Church, Laurel.

7. **Poplar Creek Nations Church, Kilmicheal,** has called Ben Hill as pastor. He comes with his wife Myra and children Savannah, Ben, Alex, and Justin.

8. **Ludlow Church, Ludlow,** has called Gary Lawson as pastor effective Sept. 9. He comes from Oak Grove Church, Simpson County, with his wife Audie and daughter Shelby.

College & Seminary News

1. **William Carey University's** Jeremy Holder and Kristin Blackledge have been selected pre-season All-Gulf Coast Athletic Conference as voted on by league coaches. Holder, a senior forward from Lumberton averaged 13.5 points per game and 7.1 rebounds per game last season as he helped the Crusaders to 19-11 record. Holder was selected All-GCAC at the conclusion of last season. Blackledge, a junior forward from Sandersville averaged 9.5 points per game and 5.3 rebounds per game last season for the Lady Crusaders. This is the second straight season Blackledge has been selected pre-season All-GCAC. Blackledge earned All-GCAC honors at the conclusion of last season. Blackledge was also selected as GCAC Freshman of the Year following the 2005-06 season.

2. Ten members of the William Carey University men's and women's soccer teams have been selected to the 2007 All-

Gulf Coast Athletic Conference teams as voted on by league coaches. Players include Valerie Split-Log, Shannon Steffen, Aimi Beresford, Danielle Princiotta, Norma Velasquez, Whitney Stewart, Rob Rogers, Carl Reynolds, Chris Schaefer, and Jared Wooley. Lady Crusaders coach Danny Owens was selected Coach of the Year of the 2007 All-Gulf Coast Athletic Conference.

3. **Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary** will inaugurate the Bobby L. and Janis Eklund Chair of Stewardship during its chapel service, Nov. 7. It is the first chair of stewardship in a Southern Baptist Seminary, and Scott Preissler, professor of stewardship, will be installed into it.

4. Five William Carey University nursing students received \$6000 RN Teaching Stipends from the Mississippi Nursing Educators Foundation's

"Nurses Touch Lives" car tag program. The students were among 5,498 nurses who paid \$31 extra for their car tags. Nurses receiving stipends from Carey are Mary Hays and Kelly Williamson of Hattiesburg, Jill Olsen of Gautier, Sandra Thomas of Chunky, and Andrea Walker of Gulfport.

5. **Mary Jean Padgett,** dean of Mississippi College's School of Nursing, was awarded Mississippi's 2007 Dean of the Year by the Mississippi Association of Student Nurses Oct. 19.

6. Mississippi Woman's College graduates and spouses attended the recent MWC Reunion held

on the Hattiesburg campus of William Carey University. Current alumni director Ginger Toledo (second row standing left), retired alumni director Donna Wheeler (first row seated right), and Tommy King, president of WCU (back row standing third from right) welcomed the individuals to the campus.



6. MWC Reunion, WCU

JUST FOR THE RECORD



21. Missions Banquet, Mississippi Association



22. New porch built, Iglesia Nueva Vida a Esperanza, Sunflower



23. Turner honored, Sunflower Church, Sunflower



24. Ladies promote missions, Branch Church, Morton

21. **Mississippi Association** held a missions banquet at Liberty Church recently. The special guest speaker was Carrie McDonnell, a survivor of the terrorist attack in Mosul, Iraq, Mar. 15, 2004, in which her husband and three other Southern Baptist missionaries were killed. Shown are AMD Alton Foster, Jimmie Foster, and McDonnell.

22. Members of **Iglesia Nueva Vida a Esperanza, Sunflower**, are shown on the new entrance porch of their church. The porch was built and other repairs made by Thompson Church, Smithdale.

23. **Sunflower Church, Sunflower** honored Gerald "Brer" Turner on his 88th birthday as the church's oldest deacon. Shown are Turner, his wife, and five children. Turner died Oct. 12.

24. The ladies of **Branch Church, Morton**, promoted the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering by wearing their hats decorated with offering envelopes. Shown are some of the ladies.

25. **DeSoto Church, DeSoto**, ordained Keith Robinson as deacon Sept. 30. Shown are pastor Keith Tankersley, Brooke Robinson, Robinson, Jodie Robinson, Paula Robinson, and AMD Grady Crowell.

26. Hispanics held their first-ever festival Oct. 13 at the Hispanic Christian Center, **Temple Church, Grenada**. The event included food, games, and train rides. Shown are nurses giving flu shots to all who wanted them.

27. **Baxterville Church, Lumberton**, ordained Larry Hale as deacon Oct. 21. Shown is pastor Raymond Parkin, Hale, and Mike Dear.

28. **Harlands Creek Church, Holmes County**, presented pastor Roger Richardson with a Matthews hunting bow for pastor appreciation day and 17 years of service. Shown are Richardson and Jimmy Thomas.

29. **Goss Church, Columbia**, is hosting The Blessing of the Hunt Nov. 15, 6 p.m., with Gary Miller, author and outdoorsman, speaker. Door prizes, including a Chuck Wagon utility vehicle, will be given away. Other vendors and exhibits. Free.

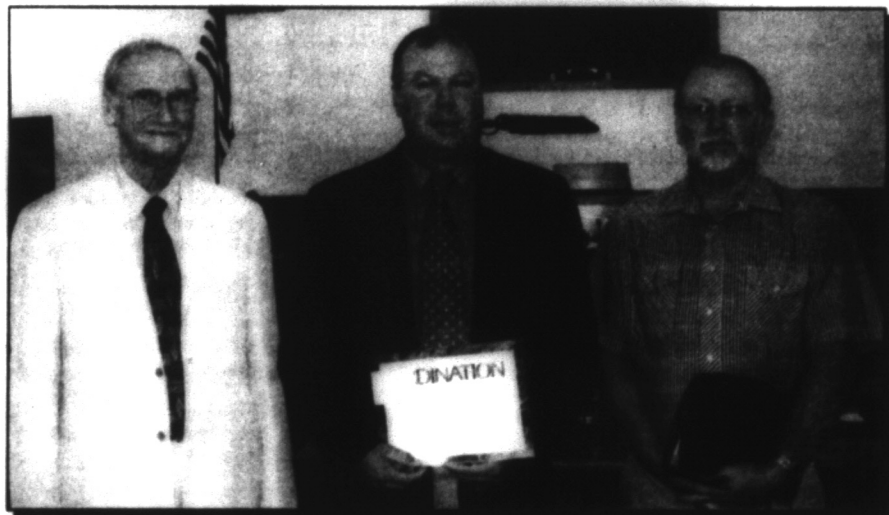
30. **Temple Church, Hattiesburg**, will celebrate 100 years of ministry Nov. 18 during morning services



25. Deacon Ordinations, DeSoto Church, DeSoto



26. Hispanic festival, Temple Church, Grenada



27. Deacon Ordination, Baxterville Church, Lumberton



28. Pastor Appreciation, Harlands Creek Church, Holmes Co.

at both the east and west campuses. At Temple's East Campus, the church will celebrate with a Homecoming Celebration during the 10:30 morning worship, followed by dinner on the grounds. At the

West Campus, located at 5220 Old Highway 11, Oak Grove, Temple will have an Anniversary Celebration during 10:30 morning worship, and an all-church fellowship following the 6 p.m. worship.

Tsunami effort opens doors once closed to Gospel

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptists who gave generously in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami will be glad to know they have helped many people not only rebuild their communities but also find meaningful lives, a development worker in the region reports.

More than 230,000 people died when a tsunami struck southern Asia in December 2004. Southern Baptists responded rapidly, sending volunteer teams and donating more than \$17 million to help the survivors.

As a direct result, survivors have found comfort, homes have been rebuilt, new businesses have been launched, and people have been trained in the skills that will help them improve their families' lives for generations.

David Jones (name changed for security reasons), a community developer who works as a field partner with Baptist Global Response, says the quick response identified Southern Baptists as people who care and opened the door for all the subsequent progress.

"We built more than 120 homes in two villages and rebuilt about that many businesses, which were the backbone of the economy in the county where we focused much of our work," Jones said. "It also allowed national Christians and volunteers from the United States to come in and help with body removal and clean-up."

Prior to the disaster relief effort, people in the area had no relationships with Christians, and interaction with national Christians and volunteers from the United States have helped many people find hope and peace, Jones said.

"We are seeing some really strong foundations being built and a great many lives have been changed," he said. "We have had thousands of volun-

teers come from all over the country and different parts of the world. Towns have been adopted and long-term relationships developed that continue to make a difference. Volunteers continue to come."

The community development team now is working in 13 villages in that county, Jones said. An extension center opened by the team gives local people an opportunity to meet international volunteers who can train them in a wide range of techniques that will greatly improve their quality of life.

"The communities are more than 100 years behind in terms of technology. That prevents a lot of advances economically, Jones said. "Without much cost, we can bring in people who have backgrounds in different areas and a lot of technology that will help in many different areas. People from the community can come together and dream about what the future could be for them."

The extension center gives community leaders opportunities for hands-on training in many skills, including forestry, animal husbandry, fisheries, agriculture and nutrition, as well as construction and business development.

"There is a crop production side to what we do. Rice is a staple part of the diet, so we are helping with advances in rice production," Jones added. "We also are experimenting with crops from differ-



HELPING HAND — Southern Baptist volunteers assist a unidentified tsunami victim in her home. The quick response to the 2004 tsunami identified Southern Baptists as people who care and opened the door for many people to not only rebuild their communities but also find meaningful lives. (BP photo)

ent parts of the world to see what else will grow in that particular climate and context." A nutrition initiative named FAITH (Food Always In The Home), meanwhile, involves gardens that help provide households with various types of food.

The extension center has introduced new technologies to improve the cottage industries that formed the backbone of the economy before the tsunami, he said.

"As a result of a co-op established following the tsunami, more than 3,000 people have been able to go back to work," he said. "That was a real shot in the arm for the economy. It helped people get back to work and to move into their new homes and provide for their families."

The extension center also is demonstrating the effectiveness of a new industry — Interlocking Concrete Earth Blocks, Jones said.

"The bricks traditionally used in construction require a lot of wood to be burned in kilns, and the forest is disappearing pretty quickly," he said. "We hope that once the community sees the benefit of the new brick technology, it will create a whole new industry for the area."

"We established a production site that has been going for almost a year now. We have worked with the soils there to identify what soils work best to make the blocks," he said. "Several different facilities have been built with the new blocks, and we are training people on how to use the blocks in construction."

"Memorials to those who lost their lives in the tsunami have been built out of the

blocks, and they are being used for fencing around many new homes," Jones added. "It's starting to take hold and hopefully will provide even more livelihoods for the communities."

The value of disaster relief, reconstruction and community development can be seen in one "man of peace" relationship that emerged in the weeks following the tsunami, Jones recounted.

"We met my friend about a week after the tsunami, when we were distributing food in a local house of worship," he said. "He asked us to come help his village, which had pretty much been wiped out. There wasn't a home left standing in a community of 3,000 people."

"My friend was out of the country on business when the wave hit, and when he was able to get back, he couldn't find any of his close relatives. They were gone."

The relief team helped locate and bury bodies and also provided tents and fresh water for the survivors. Then attention turned to helping plan reconstruction of the village.

"As we worked alongside my friend, he developed a real heart and vision for his people," Jones said. "He began sharing the principles we follow about how we are to love one another. He has become instrumental in the development work. He provided the land on which we built the extension center."

That relationship is the key that has allowed the community development team to work in the communities, Jones said. It also has created opportunities for many conversations about both improving the quality of life and finding hope and peace in difficult circumstances.

"We ask for prayers for my friend and his young bride," Jones said. "They are expecting their first child. We also ask for prayers for the people in these communities. It's a miracle that, even after the disaster relief phase was over, we could still see relationships continue with believers and the people."

U.N. racism conference panned

WASHINGTON (BP) — The United Nations' second World Conference on Racism will be focused on the fear of Islam, or "Islamophobia," and religious freedom experts are concerned it is simply an effort to sidetrack interest in the lack of tolerance and freedom inside Islamic and Arab countries.

"The world of human rights has developed a weapon. It's one that inverts victim and perpetrator. It's one that is designed to deflect attention from human rights abuses by those who violate human rights," said Ann Bayefsky, a panelist at a Hudson Institute conference Oct. 30.

The panel convened in Washington to discuss Islamophobia, a term which is actively opposed by members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), a group inside the U.N.

"There's nothing wrong with condemning Islamophobia," Bayefsky said. "The problem is that it has been manipulated as a term to mean something quite different... a kind of mass movement on the part of western governments and non-Muslims to denounce all of Islam, which is not the case."

Panelists contended the OIC has used the concept to "hijack" human rights issues. The discussion was a response to a September decision from the U.N.'s Human Rights Council to focus on prejudice against Muslims at its 2009 conference on racism in Durban, South Africa.

"As a Muslim, I can personally attest to the fact that Islamophobia is not a myth," said Fahad Nazer of the Institute for Gulf Affairs.

Nazer, however, also testified to the lack of public discourse in Saudi Arabia among those who are not of the dominant interpretation of Islam.

"Islam is the prism through which everything is filtered in Saudi Arabia," Nazer said. The mixture of religious doctrine with governmental establishments creates extreme limitations for religious minorities, which include non-Muslims, as well as Muslims who interpret the Koran differently than the Wahhabi sect.

The panel's concern was that laws against Islamophobia would be used to put up a "theological iron curtain," preventing human rights organizations from advancing basic freedoms in Islamic states.

"Proposed bans against Islamophobia are tantamount to blasphemy strictures that have been used to curtail freedoms of expression, press and religion by some of the OIC's most repressive member states," said Nina Shea, who introduced the panel.

Shea is a both a senior fellow at Hudson and a member of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). The commission, of which Southern Baptist Richard Land is a vice chair, reports to the State Department and Congress on religious liberty around the globe.

USCIRF has recommended Saudi Arabia, Iran and Pakistan for designation by the State Department as "countries of particular concern" for "ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom."